VILA RECÔNCAVO

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VILLAGE AND PLANTATION LIFE
IN NORTHEASTERN BRAZIL

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VILA RECÔNCAVO

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A Monograph from the Research and Training Program
for the Study of Man in the Tropics

Village and Plantation Life in Northeastern Brazil

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By HARRY WILLIAM HUTCHINSON

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[Title Page]

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VILA RECÔNCAVO

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Faculdade de Filosofia
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128 *Although Vila Recôncavo is a real town, the names of all persons and places have been changed for the purposes of this study.

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VILA RECÔNCAVO

VILLAGE AND PLANTATION LIFE IN NORTHEASTERN BRAZIL

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Introduction

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THE CULTIVATION of sugar cane, and the production of sugar, rum, and molasses, was one of the first commercial enterprises of the New World, following closely upon the heels of the discovery and exploration of the Americas. In many of the east coast lowlands, where the Portuguese, Spanish, English, and French did not find the metallic El Dorado they sought, they settled down to the extraction of white gold through an agricultural medium. Sugar cane was found to be an ideal crop for the rich soils and the climate of the tropical and semitropical bayoulike lowlands of Brazil, the Caribbean Islands, the Guianas, and later of Louisiana and Florida. Sugar was gaining in popularity throughout Europe at this time, and in the early days of European exploitation of the New World there was a rapidly growing sugar market in Europe, providing extraordinary returns for those who had sugar to sell.

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Wherever sugar cane took hold in the New World, there arose a distinct socioeconomic pattern. This pattern, whether in the Portuguese, Spanish, English, or French colonies, was marked by certain traits. The first of these was large landholding. Sugar planters possessed large tracts of land, usually received as grants from their respective colonial governments. Sugar-cane cultivation was done on a large scale and seldom engaged in by small farmers or peasants.

Everywhere sugar cane was grown, its cultivation was the scene of the growth of large, aristocratic families whose members were interested in and took part in colonial government, politics, the professions, and the church. Sugar-cane planters built large mansions on their plantations and

* 121 249

created a tradition of gracious living, of literature and learning, of opulence, hospitality, and ostentation.

The European did not attempt to do the agricultural labor himself but quickly put the Indians to work. When Indians proved unsuccessful as plantation laborers, the planters seized upon African slaves, who shortly became the third most important trait of the sugar-cane way of life. With the addition of the African to the scene, there grew another strong tradition among the sugar-cane planters, a tradition of paternalism and noblesse oblige toward their Negro slaves.

The cultivation of sugar cane, over a period of two hundred and more years, developed into a remarkably stable way of life and, in spite of a long history of good times mixed with depressions, became firmly entrenched in the areas where it was possible to grow it. For centuries it was a family enterprise, based on slavery, and generation after generation exploited the same plantation with the same crop, to which they developed a strong loyalty. There are few instances where, once sugar cane was planted, it has given way to other crops, even though it has not always provided the extraordinary monetary returns it gave two or three centuries ago.

During the nineteenth century, a series of important changes took place throughout the Americas which affected this very stable way of life and modified the traditional culture patterns that had been built up over a long period of time. First was the general movement during the century to abolish slavery, the very basis of New World sugar-cane cultivation. Following abolition of slavery there were also changes in the colonial governments, and, in general, the position of the aristocratic sugar planters was challenged. The exact sequence of events and their political results differed from colony to colony, but in general the same outlines were observed wherever sugar cane was grown.

More important than all of these changes, however, was the modification of the sugar industry itself at the end of the nineteenth century, which, to a great extent, hinged on the social and political changes already mentioned. In addition, competition among the various sugar-cane areas was leading to experiments with new types of machinery and refining techniques, with the hope of securing an improved product and consequently a larger share of the world sugar market. The introduction of steam-powered machinery made possible the creation of the large central sugar mill, a process which was speeded up by the loss of slave labor and the need to mechanize in order to make up for a shortage of labor. Thus the "factory-in-the-field" came to the sugar-cane industry and set off a series of changes in the former sugar-cane way of life which reached beyond the sugar-cane plantations into regional economics, into the structure of local communities, and into the social class system. It implied a more modern and far greater capital structure for the sugar industry, different types of relations between employer and employee, and the growth of a body of skilled workmen and office workers.

Finally, in the twentieth century, there are changes, everywhere apparent in the Western world, which have greatly modified the old traditional patterns of cane-growing areas. Cities are growing with remarkable rapidity; transportation is greatly improved. The radio, cinema, newspapers, magazines, schools, health posts, and more efficient national and state government action--all these and many other influences and modern trends have reached down deep into the economics, the social structure, individual and family life, and the religion and politics of the cane-growing areas.

In fact, two stages can be distinguished in the change of New World sugar-cane plantation organization since the early nineteenth century. First there was the engenho (in Brazil), or ingenio (in the Spanish-speaking colonies), the family-owned and -directed plantation and sugar mill combination.[1] Here the cane was grown and milled on the same nonmechanized plantation, where labor was provided by Negro slaves, while animal and sometimes water power was employed for milling. Paternalism, mutual rights and obligations, and a sense of noblesse oblige distinguished the relations between the planters and their slave laborers.

The second stage in the sugar-cane plantation organization is characterized by the opposite of all these traits and has been well described in Puerto Rico.[2] Land ownership has

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[1] Hereafter, the term "plantation" will be used to designate the engenho; it should be understood that, in each instance, the reference is to the family-owned and -directed plantation and sugar mill combination. (Editor's note.)

[2] Sidney W. Mintz, Cañamelar: The Contemporary Cul-

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passed out of family hands and into the hands of large-scale corporations, the actual owners of which are most often absentee. Administration is in the hands of corporation employees and specialists. The field hands and millworkers are employees of a large, impersonal corporation, basing their rights on labor laws and labor unions rather than on paternalism and traditional family obligations. The corporate, central, mechanized mill, which is the center of a large corporate agricultural enterprise, is larger than any of the old plantation types and far more efficient. Its operations are based upon the cooperative efforts of agricultural, mechanical, and chemical specialists. Transportation and communications are better, and factory towns of the new type feel the pull of modern urban patterns more strongly than did the old plantation nuclei.

Yet these influences of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have not been felt with equal intensity throughout the American sugar-producing regions. In limited areas, large sugar mills owned and operated by powerful corporations, with veritable factory towns, may be found. In other sugar-producing areas the transition is less complete, and many patterns out of the traditional past of the areas have persisted and have been adjusted to new conditions.

The northeast coast of Brazil took part in this widespread tradition of sugar-cane cultivation. The first region of Brazil to be settled, the northeast coast is often known as the cradle of Brazilian civilization. For many years it was the most important part of the Portuguese colony, economically, socially, and politically. Sugar cane was introduced shortly after the first successful colonization in the mid-sixteenth century and became the basis for the economic, social, and political power of the region.

The golden age of this regional, large-scale sugar-cane plantation culture occurred during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and was a colorful and affluent period which holds a great nostalgia for many Brazilians. This regional culture has been admirably described by several Brazilian authors. As early as 1700, Antonil, a Jesuit priest, wrote a detailed description of the physical appearance of the early

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ture of a Rural Puerto Rican Proletariat (Ph. D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1951).

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sugar-cane plantations and mills, of the techniques of cane cultivation and milling, and of the opulent way of life of the plantation owners.[3] More recently, Gilberto Freyre has given us a vivid picture of plantation life in this region during the colonial and empire periods; he describes the relations of the masters in their "big houses" (casas grandes) with the slaves in their huts (senzalas).[4] In addition, such Brazilian historians as Wanderley de Araujo Pinho[5] and Manuel Diegues, Jr.,[6] have added significantly to our picture of the way of life in the region during the early periods. Out of these historical materials emerges the picture of a well-integrated, stable society, based upon wealth from sugar, in which the aristocratic, landholding and slave-owning families were economically, socially, and politically dominant.

The sugar-cane culture of the northeast Brazilian coast kept step with the developments in the industry throughout the Americas. In 1888 slavery was abolished in Brazil, affecting the labor situation severely. One year later came the end of the Brazilian empire and the formation of the republic. In the republic the church and state were separated, and the position of the nobility of the empire, who in this region were sugar planters, was challenged. By 1900 the corporate central mill had been introduced to the region, thereby causing a series of far-reaching changes in the over-all regional culture.

However, in northeastern Brazil there are local areas which are in various degrees of change between the two major stages outlined above, that is, between the family-owned plantation and the highly industrialized, corporate, absentee-owned, land-factory system. The Recôncavo area of the state of Bahia in which this study was undertaken, for example, contains several large sugar factories (usinas), but even on the largest of these there is still a maximum of family tra-

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[3] Andre João Antonil, Cultura e opulencia do Brasil (Bahia, 1950).

[4] Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves (New York, 1946).

[5] J. Wanderley de Araujo Pinho, Historia de um engenho do Recôncavo, 1552-1944 (Rio de Janeiro, 1946).

[6] Manuel Diegues, Jr., O banguê nas alagoas (Rio de Janeiro, 1949).

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*249 ditions and of paternalism. Here, the privately owned plantation
is also still an important element.

In the community on which the present study focuses, there
is a modern sugar factory or *usina*, but control by the factory
[473] of the entire process, from cane planting and harvesting
to milling, is far from complete. Although the factory,
[423] in this case a family corporation, has bought up six neighboring
plantations, at least half its supply of sugar cane comes
from individual, family-owned plantations. Owners of these
plantations, which have conserved their original boundaries,
are often descendants of the aristocratic landholders of the
past, and many of their workers are descendants of slaves
who lived on the same plantations.

121 In this community, changes in sugar-producing technology
have not reached down into the actual cane cultivation on the
178 plantations. Emphasis has been on the improvement of milling
*249 techniques, the further refinement of sugar-cane juice,
and the perfection of the finished product by the central mill.
But the agricultural methods--planting, cultivation, harvesting,
and transportation--have remained relatively unchanged.
121 Most important of all, with the retention of these older techniques
has gone the retention to a very great degree of the old
178 accompanying social system. The present social system tends
*249 to follow the old, traditional, family-oriented, slaveholding
571 complex. The pattern of face-to-face interpersonal relations,
developed during centuries of sugar-cane monoculture based
on slavery, persists in a modified form. Although the relations
between workers and owner on these family plantations
are now those of employee and employer, and not slave and
owner, there is still the highly personal, intimate relationship
based upon mutual rights and obligations and a sense of
the obligations of nobility. Even the *usina* system perpetuates
this paternalism to a high degree.

121 The present work is a "community study" in the full sense
of the term as it is understood today in social anthropology.
It is primarily a descriptive analysis of one community in the
sugar-producing region of northeastern Brazil, but it is conceived
within the framework of the historical sequence outlined
above.

1. *Sugar Country*

THE REGION of Brazil in which this study was made is a small area in the state of Bahia called the Recôncavo. This is the land surrounding the Bay of All Saints, a fertile basin extending inland no more than 40 kilometers at the most. Situated on a high bluff overlooking the entrance to the Bay of All Saints is Salvador, the capital of the state of Bahia, generally referred to as Bahia, or "the capital," or simply "the city." After Salvador was settled in 1549, the colonization of the Recôncavo proceeded at a rapid rate. Since early in the colonial period, the Recôncavo has been divided into three distinct areas: a southern area devoted mainly to the raising of manioc, the food staple of much of Brazil; a western section devoted to the cultivation of tobacco; and a northern and eastern area, given almost exclusively to large-scale sugar-cane monoculture. This study was made in the third zone, the one producing sugar cane. 101 [133] [361]

The region, which can be called the "sugar-Recôncavo," partakes of the long tradition of sugar-cane growing which formed the basis for the early colonization of Brazil. A narrow strip of land along the northeast coast of Brazil in what are now the states of Pernambuco, Sergipe, Alagoas, and Bahia was the focus of the economic, political, and social life of the entire colony. This region, under the colonization of the Portuguese, produced a large part of the world's sugar supply at a time when sugar was a great luxury in Europe. The northeast coast of Brazil became an exceedingly prosperous part of the colony early in its history. Salvador, in Bahia, and Recife, in Pernambuco, became the most impor- 175 311 * 249

175
311 tant centers of colonial life, and until 1763 Salvador was the
[249] capital of the Portuguese colony.

The Recôncavo helped to make Brazil a unique part of the
Portuguese empire in the sixteenth century. Brazil was different from any of the other Portuguese colonies, for its
wealth proved to lie in agriculture rather than in trade, as
133 was the case in India and Africa. The Bay of All Saints, with
a circumference of 200 kilometers, is in effect an inland sea,
[361] the entrance to which can be guarded from the heights on which
the city of Salvador is situated. There are a number of picturesque islands throughout the bay, with good beaches and
landing facilities. Many small rivers empty into the bay, and
numerous creeks navigable at high tide extend further inland
[487] along its shores. The presence of such a large network of
navigable waters was an important factor in the rapid development of the Recôncavo, providing easy and inexpensive
transportation of sugar to the point of shipment to Europe.

132 The climate is semitropical, with two seasons. Summer, from September to sometime in March, is relatively dry, dotted by showers and thunderstorms and cooled by fresh breezes blowing in from the Atlantic. Winter begins in April, lasting until August or September, the exact time of change differing from year to year. This season is marked by continued rain, usually a soft, constantly falling drizzle or light rain, interspersed with heavy showers, as front after front moves in from the Atlantic, dropping its moisture before being pushed upward by the abruptly rising land which surrounds the Recôncavo. According to statistics for the years 1914 to 1938, the months of minimum rainfall are October, November, and December; during this time the average rainfall was 11.81 inches. The period of maximum rainfall is April, May, and June, with an average of 35.83 inches for the three-month period. The yearly average from 1914 to 1938 was 65.93 inches.[1] The temperature range is from 70 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

134 The soil of the Recôncavo, especially that of the sugar-Recôncavo, is extraordinarily fertile. It is a heavy black soil, known as *massapê*, approximately 6 inches to 2 feet thick, covering a clayey subsoil, known locally as *tauá*. Here and there are outcroppings of sand and mixtures of sand with clay.

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[1] *Atlas pluviometrico do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro, 1914-1938).

249* 134 Sugar cane has proved to grow especially well with the combination of warmth, rain, and massapê, and the soil has been producing the same crop for almost four hundred years. The area of massapê is sharply defined, for at its farthest edges the land rises to the regions of sandy scrub forest and desert which characterize what has been called the "other northeast"[2] or the sertão.

The surface of the sugar-Recôncavo is characterized by roll- [133]
ing fields cut by shallow valleys. Although the massapê is not
subject to erosion, the other soils, where exposed, are. Dur-
ing the rainy winter season much damage is done, especially 135
to the roads, which for the most part follow the non-massapê
soils. Underneath the soil of the sugar-Recôncavo there are 315
recently discovered oil deposits. The quantity of oil has not
yet been determined, for the explorations are still going on. 421
However, the national government has already begun to exploit the oil, which is close to the surface. Under Brazilian law, subsoil resources belong to the national government and not to the owner of the lands. As a result there has been a small-scale invasion of petroleum workers on the privately owned lands of the sugar-cane planters. To date, this has not interrupted the agricultural routine to any great extent, at least not in Vila Recôncavo. In Conselho (see map of community), where the drilling was first started, the government bought the land from the individuals and the sugar mill corporation owning it and has turned once green fields of sugar cane into bare fields, spotted here and there with oil wells. The former agriculturalists have had to leave the area or become laborers in the oil camps and refinery.

161 The Recôncavo is one of the most densely populated regions in Brazil. It is an area of 6,500 square kilometers, with a population of 683,000 in 1940, distributed in 14 counties including the capital. It has an average density of 106 inhabitants per square kilometer,[3] in comparison with the average density of the state of Bahia, which is 7 persons per square kilometer, and with the national average of 5 persons per square kilometer.[4] It must be remembered that these figures include

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 13]

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[2] Preston James, Latin America (New York, 1942), p. 411.

[3] Aroldo de Azevedo, "Recôncavo da Bahia," Revista da Universidade de São Paulo, I (1950), 14.

[4] T. Lynn Smith, Brazil (Baton Rouge, 1947), p. 131.

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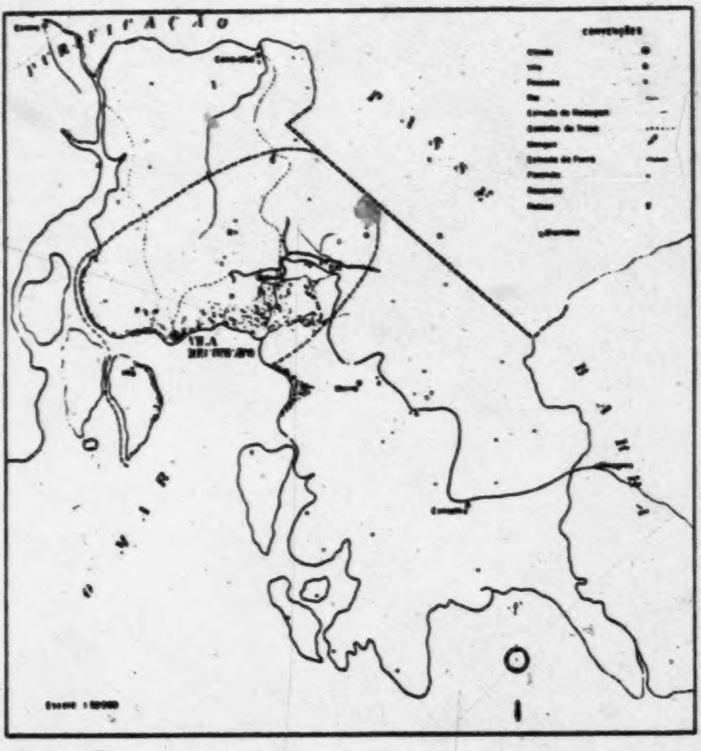

[P.12]

Map of the community of Vila Recôncavo

It must be remembered that these figures include 161
the capital city, the population of which is about 450,000. If [162]
this is subtracted from the total population of the Recôncavo,
the average density of the Recôncavo is approximately 27 persons
per square kilometer.

Vila Recôncavo, the community of this study, is part of a 101
county located 41 kilometers across the bay from Salvador.
The community includes the town of Vila Recôncavo, which is 634
the county seat, and the surrounding rural zone. Throughout (121]
the study we will be dealing with these two components of the
sugar-cane plantation community, sometimes separately and
sometimes together.

The only public transportation to the town is by boat from the 505
capital, a three-hour trip across the bay, threading through 501
numerous islands. The major part of the trip is made on remarkably blue water, usually serenely calm but occasionally violently agitated, especially during the winter. One-, two-, and three-masted sailing vessels and an occasional large sailing canoe, the centuries-old methods of transportation in Bahia, are passed on their way into the city, carrying fruit, vegetables, pottery, firewood, fish, tobacco, manioc flour, and sugar to the more than four hundred thousand people of the city, as they have done since the early colonization of the Recôncavo. The only new element in the scene is the small diesel boat which makes the trip back and forth across the bay, outward bound one day and returning the next with the outgoing tide.

As the boat nears the luxuriantly green, palm-crested islands, 505
stopping at several to discharge the mail, passengers,
and "city goods," one becomes aware of the feeling of stepping [857]
back into the past. Barefoot children are selling oranges,
peanuts, and fish; and parrots and parakeets, sometimes [443]
doped with rum to make them appear tame. The mailman on
the dock receives the sack of mail and gives it to his helper [205]
to carry to the post office; the island priest may receive a [793]
message or package entrusted to the captain of the boat or
may even go aboard to travel to the church on another island.
The others on the dock call to friends on the boat and exchange
news or else simply watch the activity of docking the boat and (142)
the casting off. The people of the islands are light-skinned,
although well sunburned. Many of them are vacationers from [528]
the city, dressed in brightly colored clothes, for the islands
are well-known resorts. The others, barefoot, wearing shorts

505 The others, barefoot, wearing shorts
[291] and large-brimmed straw hats, are the permanent dwellers of
the islands: fishermen, stevedores, and storekeepers.

When the islands are left behind, the scene begins to change.
505 The color of the water changes from a clear, deep blue to a
133 muddy gray. Groups of canoes are seen, their occupants busy
with their fish nets, for this shallow part of the bay is a good
[581] fishing ground. Once again the mainland is close, rolling hills
covered with a thousand shades of green--sugar cane, the
[226] crop which nearly four hundred years ago replaced the virgin
forests. The deltalike shores of this part of the bay are covered with mangue, muddy areas with low-growing trees which
[361] at high tide are standing in the water. On a hill at the water's
[162] edge is the town of Vila Recôncavo, a town of 1,462 persons.
The first thing one sees is the huge Franciscan convent[5] with
[368] its two tall towers and its royal palms. Approaching the long
dock which juts out into the water, one can see almost the
[504] whole town, which is built on three hills and in the valleys
between them.

The arrival of the boat from Salvador every other day is an
[361] event in an otherwise dull day. Nearly all the men of the town
505 go down to the dock to meet the boat, to see who is traveling,
to see what is arriving for someone in the town, to receive
512 messages or parcels, to greet friends, and to gossip. The
postmistress is there, and with her the man whose duty it is
to carry the mail sack, but who has a helper to do it for him.
After a few minutes the boat continues its journey, and the
townsfolk walk back along the dock, breaking up into small
groups on reaching the main square and then each going his
own way.

361 On the square at the end of the dock, at the foot of the
344 main street which leads up the middle hill and out into the

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[128] [5] It should be explained that "convent" in this case is a direct translation from Portuguese. In Portuguese, convent does not have the connotation of being a religious establishment only for women. The word convento is applied to the Franciscans' establishment because the Franciscans are not monks; if they were, their establishment would be called a mosteiro (monastery). In English, Franciscans are known as "friars," and their houses are called "friaries." However, throughout this monograph the direct translation, convent, is used.

country beyond, is a large, colonial, two-story building-- 361
the county courthouse (prefeitura), the official center of lo- [344]
cal county administration. With heavily barred windows on
the ground level, it also serves as the county jail. At the top [697]
of the hill is a large church, the mother church of the parish
of São Roque. On the right, on top of another hill, is the im- [368]
posing Franciscan convent. The main street of the town is
narrow, paved with cobblestones and lined by old colonial [363]
houses in various stages of repair. To the left one sees the
"beach," which at low tide is an expanse of ugly black mud,
typical of the shores of this back part of the bay. The long 501
dugout canoes of the fishermen are anchored there and rest on
the bottom when the tide is out.

As the boat sails away and the townspeople go about their 181
business, the streets empty, and a peculiar hush, which is
characteristic of Vila Recôncavo, falls over the town. There
is an atmosphere not so much of sleepiness and inertia as of
decadence, as though life had already passed by. The few
people who remain somehow seem to be left over from some-
thing in the past. The houses which face the main street are 342
somber, their façades going straight up two stories from the
street, their windows shuttered. Some of them are crumbling,
the mortar falling away, exposing the stone of which they are
built; others are in complete ruin. All of them are turning
black from the constant exposure to humid salt air, and moss
is growing on the walls where the sun never strikes.

From the top of the hill, in front of the mother church, there 361
is a magnificent view of the Bay of All Saints, and it is easily
understood why this place was chosen 332 years ago as the
site for a new town. This part of town is the old Vila Recôn-
cavo (see map of town), dating back to a time when the settle-
ment was the only administrative center of inland colonial
Bahia. Upon this hill and the one on which the convent stands,
the elite of the sugar lands built their town houses called so-
brados. Once upon a time these streets with their stepping- [363]
stones were the scene of colonial opulence, of sedan chairs
carried by liveried slaves, of soldiers in uniform, of ladies
wearing gloves and carrying parasols. Today this old part of
Vila Recôncavo is inhabited by simpler people, the town's up-
per class, who eke out a living in the local bureaucracy, or as
merchants, or as representatives of the state and federal
governments. They are quiet, gentlemanly people trying to
keep up a semblance of dignity, a feat which becomes more
difficult all the time.

Vila Recôncavo

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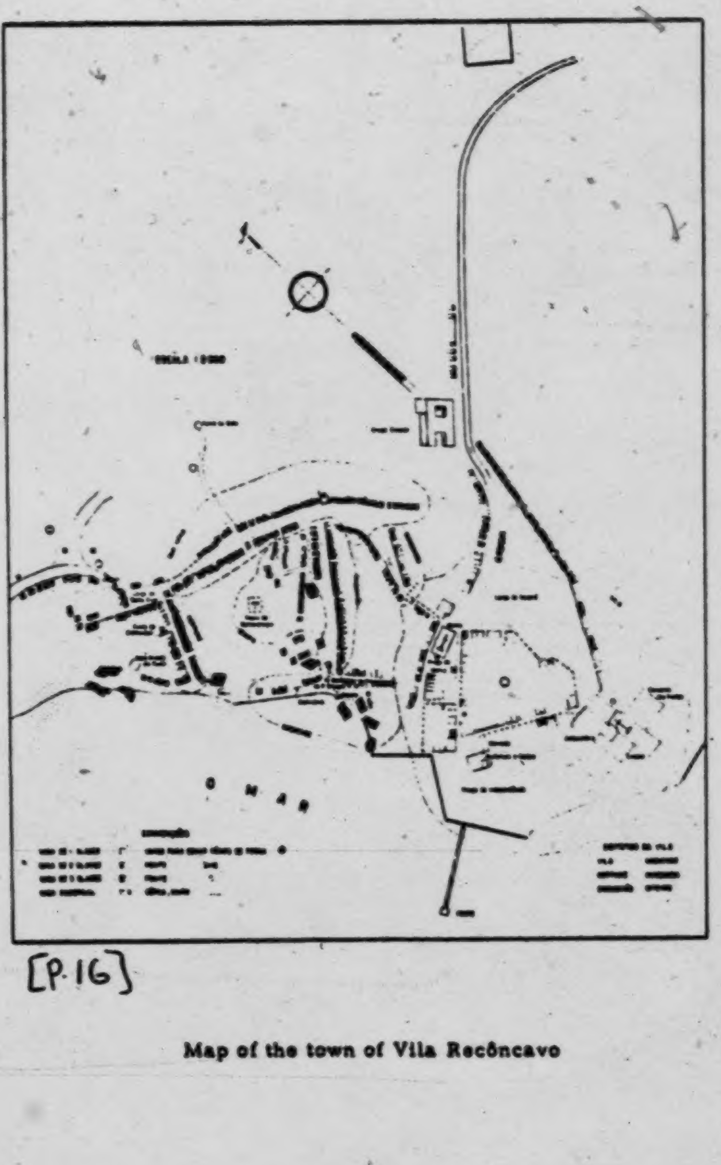

[p.16]

Map of the town of Vila Recôncavo

To the west, on the third hill, along the "beach," and in the small valleys, there is a different atmosphere. 361 342 Here, in the Caquende, Boqueirão, Cortume, and Rua Nova (see map of town), there are no sobrados, no signs of former grandeur. The houses are of another style--small, one-story buildings with no air of antiquity about them. Some are made of brick, but most are of mud on a bamboo or mangue frame. Many have been coated with whitewash, some recently and some a long time ago. [178] On the summit of this third hill, the Oiteiro, are the poorest houses of all, one- and two-room mud houses with thatched roofs. 361 Recently in this section there have been some new-style houses built, tipo bangalo (bungalow-type), and there are signs of a growing prosperity among a few enterprising people. [463] These areas of fishermen, of small storekeepers, and of those with crafts such as carpentry, bricklaying, and shoemaking, are the most heavily populated parts of the town of Vila Recôncavo today. According to the old inhabitants of the town, this section was undeveloped sixty years ago, and, to the old people, Vila Recôncavo is still up there on the hill, in the area of the sobrados. [366] Nevertheless, the majority of the stores are in the lower part of town, which even has its own chapel. [368] It is here that the children play although they must go up the hill to school. It is here that there are groups of men gossiping and having a drink of rum. It is here that an attitude of open friendliness prevails, and there are friendly faces at the windows. It is here that the drums beat when the African gods are feted.

206 The post office, located in the upper part of town, also has a telegraph. [205] Messages go by special telephone to the nearby town of Centro, from where they are sent by wire. [368] There is also a public telephone in the town which has two extensions, one in the house of the mayor and one in the house of the doctor. Other people must go to the telephone office to make or receive calls. The telephone is very uncertain; not only is it frequently impossible to get a call through but often nothing can be heard once the connection is made. From the town it is possible to speak through Centro to Salvador. It is also possible to speak to the sugar factory, and through its switchboard to several of the sugar plantations.

365 In recent years electricity has been brought to the town, and, in addition to lights on the streets, 78 of the 408 buildings in town have electricity. [207] Of these, twenty-one have radios, and three have electric irons. [251] Only the doctor, the health post, and the bar have refrigerators.

000 546 health post, and the bar have refrigerators. On Saturday and Sunday nights there is a movie, the same film being shown both nights.

491 There are only two roads leading out of the town. One goes northwest to Centro, following a ridge which leads along the 492 river through a section of poor soil devoted to gardens of man- 484 ioc and bananas. On horseback it is a trip of approximately two hours to Centro. The other road leads northeast into the sugar-cane fields and to the sugar factory and then continues east, eventually leading to the oil fields of Conselho and out onto the major Bahian artery from Salvador to the interior city of Feira de Santana. The journey from Vila Recôncavo to the main highway takes about four hours on horseback. Although the local road, made during the empire and part of the public domain, is called the "royal road," it is really only one-track dirt. In the summer it affords a hard surface because the hot sun bakes the earth, but during the winter it turns into a river of mud. During the rainy season the layer of clay underneath the topsoil holds the water, turning the roads into practically impassable quagmires. The situation becomes even worse just after the rains end and the surface dries, for when a man or animal breaks through the dried surface and sinks down into the clay the suction created is difficult to overcome. A trip which during the summer takes half an hour on horseback may take from three to four hours in the winter. The horse must pick and choose each step with the utmost care. During these months travel is extremely fatiguing for horses and mules, and frequent changes of mount are necessary. During this part of the year one avoids making an inland journey if possible, and keeps to the waterways.

491 [421] From Usina to Conselho (see map of community), the road has been recently coated with oil, sand, and broken stone by the Conselho Nacional de Petroleo in an attempt to make an all-weather route. The surfacing has proved fairly satisfactory but very expensive. Although this highway follows the old "royal road," it is owned by the conselho. When a plantation owner of the area wishes to pass over it in his car or jeep, he must secure permission from the conselho office in [493] Salvador. Nevertheless, in the past year this road has proved a boon to the plantation owners, who can now go back and forth [484] to their homes in the city in about two hours at almost any time of the year, eliminating the long journey by horseback or canoe to the town of Vila Recôncavo to take the boat. The

496 492 The railroad from Salvador to the interior passes about 15 kilometers east of Vila Recôncavo, and the planters situated near it experience the same difficulties of horseback travel when getting the train to go to the city.

484 [489] There is no public transportation within the county. The train is so far from the town of Vila Recôncavo that it is not used by the town dwellers. Most of the population walks to wherever it is going, except to Salvador. Few people in town have horses or mules, for there is insufficient pasture nearby. As a result of the poor roads, the townspeople are dependent upon water navigation, a factor which helps to orient them to other towns by the water's edge and discourages communication between the town and the plantations of the interior of the county. At any season, there is little happening in the plantation area to attract the townspeople. On the other hand, people from the plantation come to the town, especially to see the doctor, for a special Mass, or to take the boat to Salvador. 49 484 They rarely come for the movie, except those few subsistence gardeners (roçeiros) who live nearby, for travel is too difficult. During the dry season almost all transportation of goods is accomplished by an ox-drawn cart (carro de boi) with two large, solid wooden wheels drawn by eight oxen (junta de boi). The cart is driven by a man, and the oxen follow a small boy who walks in front of them.

131 361 The community of Vila Recôncavo comprises an area of some 80 square kilometers in the shape of a semicircle, bounded on one side by water and on the other by a high ridge. This area, which includes the town of Vila Recôncavo, forms a natural as well as a cultural unit. The remaining 100 square kilometers of the county fall into two subregions, one very small area which is oriented toward Centro and Cana-Uba (see map), and another which is strongly oriented toward Salvador. [634] The three areas are drawn together by local administration: police, school system, tax collecting, and the collection of statistics--in other words, by the formal structure of county administration.

361 249* The 80 square kilometers of the community of Vila Recôncavo are composed almost entirely of thirteen large plantations, eleven of which are devoted to the cultivation of sugar cane. Of the other two, one plants cane on a small scale and rents most of its land to subsistence gardeners, while the second is a summer home, producing nothing. Of the eleven which plant sugar cane, six belong to the sugar factory which

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*249 is located at the water's edge on one of the six plantations; three belong to different members of another family related to the sugar factory owners through marriage; one belongs individually to a member of the family owning the factory; and the last one belongs to a nonrelative, a mestiço (person of [871] mixed racial descent), who is socially reticent but considered an astute businessman. Within the area there is also a federal school which has a large expanse of noncultivated land.

361 The pattern of settlement on the plantations is that of a village. The homes of the cultivators are grouped in a cluster apart from the land they work, the point of orientation being the owner's home. "Although the village settlement as represented by the homes of the small-farming classes is hardly to be found in Brazil, the village manner of arranging the population on the land is widely used on the large estates that are prominent throughout the Brazilian countryside. For the most part the fazendas and usinas of Brazil utilized this nucleated form of settlement in their 'quarters' or 'colonies' for the workers who till the crops."[6]

162 The population of the rural zone of the community of Vila Recôncavo is 2,800, of whom 500 live at the sugar factory nucleus; on each of the sugar-cane plantations there are between *249 150 and 200 persons. Traveling about from one plantation nucleus to another, one sees no sign of habitation, for the coun- 311 try is devoted to intensified sugar-cane cultivation. Fields of sugar cane, 10 to 20 acres in size, alternate with pastures--fields which are being rested for three or four years. Each private plantation has a section of forest to produce firewood and lumber. The factory plantations, however, for the most part are entirely cleared, as the corporation owns another plantation on the other side of the Recôncavo which is used exclusively for raising and pasturing cattle and for supplying *249 firewood for the large fires of the factory. [423] Land divisions or boundaries are generally long lines of graceful bamboo trees which also supply fence posts. On each plantation can be seen the remains either of the old sobrado or of the antique mill (engenho) or chapel (capela), and in some cases the sobrado is still in good repair and inhabited by the owner.

312 The Recôncavo is not blessed with abundant fresh water. The rivers are few and small, prone to dry up in the hot sum-

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[6] T. Lynn Smith, Brazil (Baton Rouge, 1947), p. 396.

mers. However, on almost every plantation there are brick-lined 312
springs from which the inhabitants get their drinking water.
Women or children carrying five-gallon cans of water on [482]
their heads, and donkeys carrying four wooden kegs of water, [492]
are common sights along the roads of the Recôncavo. For the
cattle and other livestock of the plantations, drinking places 231
are excavated wherever there promises to be enough water. 312
Frequently, however, these go dry in the summer, especially [132]
during the drought years which occur cyclically in rhythm
with the droughts of the sertão. At such times loss of cattle
is prevalent, except on plantations situated near one of the
small rivers.

A high-voltage electric line passes through this section 377
leading from the generating station further inland to the capital
city. Recently most of the plantations have been able to
connect with this line, so that at least the owners' houses have
electric light. The houses of the workers are without it except
at the factory, where the mill supplies its own electric power
which is carried to almost all the workers' houses.

There are four state schools and one county school distributed 871
among the plantations. The central school in the town of
Vila Recôncavo is not attended by children from the plantations.
Two plantations have their own chapels, which are visited 347
at irregular intervals by the priests of Vila Recôncavo. 796
On the other plantations a small altar is set up in the owner's 793
house for special occasions such as Christmas, when the town
priest is invited to celebrate the Mass.

There is in the town a medical post with a visiting doctor, [743
a dentist, and several nurses in training, which is administered
by a Franciscan lay brother and supported by federal,
state, and county funds and by private donations. This post
is fairly recent, and its influences are spreading only slowly
to the rural area. Also in the town is a small county medical
post run by a resident physician. The sugar factory has a [249]*
dispensary with a nurse and is visited by the town doctor. Almost
every plantation has its own first-aid equipment, generally [752]
in the owner's house.

There are no fairs in the community. There are stores in 543.
the town and a large supply store at the factory, run by the
corporation, and nearly every plantation has its own small 443
store. Major purchases are made at the weekly market in Centro, [249]*
in the neighboring county. There are also traveling ped-

443 dlers (ambulantes) who walk through the area in the summer selling combs, ribbons, jewelry, and perfumes.

561 One of the most important factors influencing the fortunes of
the town of Vila Recôncavo is the diversity of attitudes toward
565 it held by different segments of the local population. The most
369 powerful group, although small in number, is that of the plantation and sugar-mill owners. The orientation of this group is polarized between the capital city, Salvador, and the plantations. There is no one living in the town who is included in the same social stratum as these people, and therefore the town is not a social drawing point for them as it might be in the plantation area of the southern United States. Vila does not represent a shopping center for them, and it is not an outlet for their sugar. Since they are so near the capital, business is transacted there rather than in the small rural town with its poor communications. This group as a whole looks upon the town as a decadent and backward place. There is little or no feeling among these people that they should "do something" to improve the town, to which they feel little or no allegiance. Rather, their allegiance is first to Bahia and to their own social class in the state, and second to the Recôncavo, the original seat of that class.

The plantation and sugar-mill workers also disregard Vila to a large extent, generally not considering it worth the effort involved in getting there. For these people the market in Centro and the sugar mill store are the major attractions of the area. Their social life is centered almost entirely within the plantation or at the sugar mill.

The town dwellers themselves have an ambivalent attitude toward their town, for, while they also feel that Vila is backward and without opportunity for personal advancement, they nevertheless consider themselves an urban group in contrast
369 to the plantation workers. Recent improvements in the town,
365 such as the installation of electricity and the introduction of radios, movies, and other electrical appliances, as well as the pavement of the mud streets with cobblestones, have been a great help in alleviating the former forlorn air of the town, once known as the "abandoned" town. The local population still speaks of this earlier state a great deal, almost with the haunt-
[652] ing fear that such conditions might return. The funds for these
[653] public works came from sources outside the county, that is, from grants of money by the state government during the epoch of the interventores, the governors appointed during the dic-

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tatorial regime of Getulio Vargas. One of the last of these was 365 a son of the county who wished to leave a permanent remembrance of his family in the town. 653 Most of the work was done by local labor, which brought a certain measure of prosperity [652] to the town. Certainly the appearance of the town changed. New façades were added to many houses; others were freshly painted in gay colors; and some people constructed cement sidewalks in front of their homes. At night the streets are 365 brighter because of the electric street lights (which are turned 369 off at midnight) and because of the rays of bright electric light passing through the cracks of the closed window shutters and doors.

Almost every evening at dusk, however, the electric power of the countryside is shut off for at least an hour because of inadequate generating facilities at the main plant, leaving the countryside and small towns in darkness. [416] At this hour the town returns to its past, and one seems to be in an era one, two, or three hundred years ago. Tiny oil lamps (fifós) are lighted, or an occasional kerosene lamp, the soft and short-reaching rays of which barely penetrate the heavy darkness of the house and do not reach the street. A hush falls over the town during the spell of darkness. All the old fears of shadows, malevolence, and lobishomens (werewolves) return. The family congregates in one room, for no one wants to be alone, speaking softly as though not to break the spell. The streets are suddenly emptied, and the silence is broken only by the occasional forlorn braying of a donkey left wandering outside.

Without light there is no life in Vila Recôncavo. The evening religious service is delayed; the movie is delayed; the bar closes. One thinks of the impermanence of the new prosperity, remembering how quickly the moist salt air can blacken the gayest colored building, how the heavy rains can wash away the foundation of a mud house, how fast the weeds can grow in the cracks of the pavement, and how by the flick of a switch in some faraway place the magical lights are removed. A heavy gloom settles over the town and remains until, as suddenly as they went off, the lights return. Life picks up again, radios blare forth at fullest volume, and Vila Recôncavo once again is grateful for light and life, however impermanent. 814

Although this is a traditional area, few local people know its history. Only a few can provide historical data going back further than one generation, and even fewer know anything of what lies behind the "glorious past" of Vila Recôncavo, a

814 phrase one hears often but without further elucidation. Al-
though there are many ruins of old town houses and plantations
dotting the area and even the town streets, few people can tell
anything about them or about their former illustrious owners.
217 Almost no historical documents can be found in the town, as
most of the old records have either been destroyed by insects
and dampness or burned at intervals when there was no longer
room for their storage, or else have come into private hands
in small quantities. Most clerical records of the convent and
mother church of the parish have disappeared, although un-
[127] doubtedly some are stored in church archives in Salvador and
Olinda (Pernambuco). Some information was obtained from the
office of the justice of the peace, where records go back to
1800 and consist mostly of testaments and inventories and rec-
ords of a few lawsuits involving property, including slaves.

621 The community of Vila Recôncavo gives the impression of
being a large private preserve. The town serves as contact
609 point with the outside. Although the inhabitants of the commu-
nity frequently leave it for business or visits, it is seldom
that a stranger enters the area. There are no facilities in the
town or in the rural area to care for one who has no family
ties in the community. Going along the roads of the community
one can identify practically everyone encountered, if not by
name then at least as to where he is from. The higher a per-
son's position on the social scale, the more likely he is to be
known by name to a great part of the community. Strangers
are probably someone's guests. But the appearance of an un-
identified person alone gives cause for speculation.

2. *History of the Town*

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A STRANGER newly arrived in the town of Vila Recôncavo might justifiably question the reasons for its existence, since it almost seems to be an island in a vast sea of sugar cane. The daily life of the town dwellers, who are fishermen, artisans, and county officials, apparently has little to do with the rural area. In order to understand the separateness of the town and the rural area, it is necessary to investigate the history of both. For, although Vila Recôncavo now appears to be [178] sharply cut off from the life of the plantations and the sugar mill, it has been in the past closely bound up with the fortunes of the rural landowners and is still directly affected by the rural area.

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The history of this area began during the governorship of Mem de Sá, which lasted from 1557 to 1574. Mem de Sá was the third governor general of the new Portuguese colony of Brazil. The capital of the colony was the city of Salvador, which was settled successfully in 1549 in the second of two attempts. By the time of Mem de Sá, the back part of the Bay of All Saints remained to be wrested from the Indians to complete the colonization of the Recôncavo, a task to which he dedicated himself and which he accomplished in a few years. As new areas were conquered, the land was divided among the favored few in the form of land grants (sesmarias). Mem de Sá took as his own land grant three and a half leagues of coastline extending four leagues inland, plus two islands. The eastern tip of this land grant is now Vila Recôncavo, and the remainder falls into the county of Purificação. Mem de Sá erected one of the largest and best plantations of the colony here, which "he esteemed as much for its value and income

175 as with pride and love for having made it appear from untamed wilds."[1] After his death the land passed to his son, who died shortly after and left the property to his sister, the Countess of Linhares and wife of Fernando Noronha. Noronha died not too long after, and his wife remarried, again becoming a widow and also losing her own children. At her death in 1618, what had not already been sold of the land was bequeathed to various religious organizations.[2]

It was reported in 1587 that there were fourteen plantations in the area that later became the county of Vila Recôncavo.[3] In 1591 the Franciscans went through the Recôncavo, looking for a place to build a convent. They established a "small hospice" in 1618 on what is now plantation "N" (see map of community). This hospice lasted only two years, for in 1620 the friars returned to Salvador.[4] In 1624 the Franciscans returned to the town, selected a spot of high ground on the shoreline overlooking the Bay of All Saints, and started to construct a chapel and convent. At this time Gaspar dos Reis Pinto was in possession of plantation "N," which included the area chosen by the Franciscans for their construction. In 1633 Gaspar gave 143 square braças (1 braça=6 ft.) to the religious order.[5] With the founding of the convent, the town of Vila Recôncavo received a major impulse, becoming a nucleus for further development.

175 The seventeenth century saw a period of great expansion in
165 the Recôncavo--the erection of many plantations and the in-
567 crease of population, mainly due to the importation of great
634 numbers of African slaves. During this period the first two
formal administrative divisions of the Recôncavo were or-
ganized. In Vila Recôncavo, a military district created in
1668 was the first formal unit. Troubles with the Dutch in the
712 early part of the century and continuing invasions and sack-
175 ings by pirates led to the necessity of fortifying appropriate
634 places in the Recôncavo, such as the mouths of rivers emp-

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[1] J. Wanderley de Araujo Pinho, Testamento de Mem de Sá (Rio de Janeiro, 1941), p. 33.

[2] Ibid., p. 19.

[3] Gabriel Soares de Sousa, Noticias do Brasil (São Paulo, n.d.), I, Book I, 282.

[4] de Araujo Pinho, Testamento de Mem de Sá, p. 54.

[5] Ibid.

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tying into the Bay, to protect the plantations situated on river 634
banks, a location in all other respects ideal for sugar 712
mills. Vila Recôncavo was chosen as the site for a battery in 726
1668 and was given guns and men. It was also necessary to
maintain a small fleet of armed ships to help repel pirates. [706]
One side of the hill on which the convent is situated, which overlooks the Bay and lies directly at the mouth of the river coming from Centro, is still called the Battery in remembrance of the days when it was part of the old fortifications.

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The second formal administrative unit to be formed was
that of the county of Vila Recôncavo. Until 1693 Salvador was 634
the only judicial and legislative center in Bahia. Because of development in the Recôncavo it was thought necessary at this time to create three vilas in the area, this being the term then applied to the administrative centers of counties. Thus in February of 1698 Vila Recôncavo became one of the first organized counties (municipios) in the Recôncavo, a transformation which made it the center of much activity as it was now the seat of local rural government, tax collecting, and justice. Since its creation the county of Vila Recôncavo has shrunk in size as new counties have been established in the Recôncavo. Vila Recôncavo lost part of its land, until in 1945 it retained only 189 square kilometers, less than half its original area.

Prior to either military or civil divisions, there had already 175
existed religious divisions, or parishes. The parish of 794
São Gonçalo included the town of Vila Recôncavo and much of
the hinterland. The mother church (matriz) of the parish was 346
constructed in the town in 1678. It was reconstructed in 1887 by the third Baron of Vila Recôncavo, at which time it had fallen into such disrepair that the reconstruction was a complete renovation. This was done in great simplicity, blotting out most of the former ornateness. Today it is again in need of repair as the plaster is falling off, exposing the still solid stone and cement construction of three-foot-thick walls. Most of the wood in the altars, floors, and inner partitions is rotting away. The outside has turned black from the action of the
salt air on the whitewash. For more than forty years the parish [793]
has been unable to support a priest, and the duties of caring for the spiritual needs of the parishioners has fallen upon the Franciscans. The church is opened now only for Mass on Sundays, and for occasional missions and weddings throughout the year.

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In 1718 the chapel of the Franciscan convent was replaced 346

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346 by a large and sumptuous church, in which the first Mass was
celebrated in 1722. The magnificence of the church is still
present, although the original altars have been replaced by
[532] new ones. Exquisite tiles depicting the life of St. Anthony, to
whom the church is dedicated, line the sides of the church.
The floors are of marble, and the wooden ceilings are painted
[322] in oils. It is said that the marble and the painted ceilings were
brought from Portugal. The woodwork in the choir loft and
[805] sacristy is beautiful hand-worked rosewood. The clock in the
bell tower which rings the hour and half-hour is still the town
timepiece, its sound reaching far out over the Bay. Under the
marble floor, between the altar and the communion rail, are
[764] the tombs of the early families of Vila Recôncavo. The names
inscribed on the tombs constitute a roster of families now
scattered throughout the nation.

It is not known exactly when the Tertiary Order of Francis-
175 cans was first formed in Vila Recôncavo, but it too has left
792 its mark on the face of the town, for it constructed another
large church and two-story building at the side of the convent.
346 The chronicler of the convent in the early 1900's wrote:

> Of the epoch of the formation of the Tertiary Order and the construction of the church and buildings nothing remains, not a document exists, with the exception of one book, consisting of the elections, offices, and resolutions of the Order. This book was begun in 1853 and ended in 1866. On the ceiling of the church appears the date 1751, in white paint, which seems to be of the original workmanship, and at the side of it can be seen in black paint "repaired in 1844." The lands of the Order are known only through the tradition of the people, since no document exists.[6]

If the date 1751 can be taken as the date of the construction of the church of the Tertiary Order, it can be assumed that the Order existed in Vila Recôncavo some time before this date, at least early in the 1700's. These additions to the convent were the last of the noble constructions in the town of Vila Recôncavo and took place at the end of the town's flourishing period. They were the last public expression of grandeur in the

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[6] Author's translation.

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county and among the first to fall into decline and extinction in 175
the days following the sugar boom. The remaining buildings 792
of the Order are now used for quite a different purpose, which 346
will be discussed later.

The first half of the eighteenth century saw the final flourishing 175
of Vila Recôncavo and the beginning of its fall into obscurity. 361
By 1700 the town was a thriving urban center--the
newly created seat of local government, a military post, a [632
highly active religious center, and the scene of the local
courts of justice. In addition to large public buildings, imposing
private residences dotted the streets, for many of the
plantation owners constructed large houses in the town, which
they used as stopping places in their journeys to and from
their plantations and Salvador. Then as now, however, Vila
Recôncavo was not the main center of attraction for the planters
and their families, most of whom had houses in the capital
where they spent the rainy seasons. Nevertheless, the presence
of their large and ornate town houses gave a certain air
of distinction and prosperity to the town.

The story of the decline of the town of Vila Recôncavo is 175
symptomatic of what happened to many other towns in the region 178
at a later date. Vilhena connects the decadence of Vila
Recôncavo with the creation of the administrative center of 361
Centro in 1727.[7] Until that time Centro had been a sitio (terminal
designation for a small town), created in 1608. Toward
the end of the seventeenth century the best lands of the Recôncavo,
situated in what is now the county of Purificação,
came into use as a result of the cessation of Indian attacks
and of improvement in the machinery used in the plantations. [249]*
Sugar mills powered by water no longer held as great an advantage
as they had previously; over a hundred years of sugar-cane [376]
operation had pretty well stripped the littoral of the
firewood necessary for continued high production; and by this
time the coastal regions no longer held room for expansion.
As the colonists pushed farther inland from Centro they found [249]*
an abundance of the rich massapê lands and sufficient firewood
for the needs of many plantations, and soon the number of inland
sugar mills surpassed that of the coast.

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[7] Luis dos Santos Vilhena, Noticias soteropolitanas e brasilicas, 1802, ed. Bras do Amaral (Salvador, 1922), p. 502.

438 Centro, situated on the banks of a navigable river which
175 empties into the Bay in front of the town of Vila Recôncavo,
was in a good position to serve the entire back region of the
361 Recôncavo. As a county it now comprises 1,180 square kilometers. As a port, Centro served two purposes in the early
[634] eighteenth century. A great deal of produce and many persons
[131] passed through it, including the families of sugar-cane growers from other regions of the Recôncavo; and it also served
[504] as a "gateway to the West" at a time when western Bahia and
Minas Gerais were being opened and the gold and diamond
rushes were in progress. Centro was the end of navigable
[487] waters and the beginning of one of the overland routes leading to the uplands of the sertão and the mining areas of the
[634] west. As Centro grew, Vila Recôncavo stagnated. In 1833
Centro was made judicial center (cabeça de comarca) of the
district and Vila Recôncavo became part of this judicial district, thereby losing its prominence as the center of jurisdiction for the interior zone of the Recôncavo. Commercially,
Vila Recôncavo was soon overshadowed by Centro. In 1802,
Vilhena wrote:

> . . . In Centro there is a great deal of commerce, because of the amount of sugar, tobacco, and the number of distilleries and of Mineiros [miners and people from the state of Minas Gerais] who arrive there. Continuing along the bank of the river one finds Vila Recôncavo, which in spite of enough sugar passing through it, always had a weak commerce, and the town is known among all the others as the town of the least traffic.[8]

He says later:

> 175 In spite of its antiquity, Vila Recôncavo has few in-
> 361 habitants, and most of them poor, although through-
> 438 out the termo there are many good families of noble
> people, rich through the products of their large engen-
> 433 hos, from which they take much and excellent sugar,
> the only commerce of that town; in it also there is fishing for a little sardinelike fish called xangó and a large quantity of good and large shrimp, which is the main

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[8] Ibid., Letter I, p. 32 (author's translation).

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occupation of the poor people, who sell them after drying [438]
in the city of Salvador. . . .[9] [433]

In 1837 Centro officially became a city, and for another hundred [443]
years it was the major commercial point of the sugar-Recôncavo.
Gradually, however, it fell into the same pattern of [178]
decline which continues today in so much of the Recôncavo.
In the 1900's a railroad was constructed from Salvador to 175
Feira de Santana; it passed well back of Vila Recôncavo, missing
it so far as to be of no aid whatsoever. Although it passed 361
through Centro, the terminal point, Feira, became more important 496
commercially to the state and became the new gateway
to the north, west, and south of the state and of the nation.
Although Centro is now a large town with a population of some 175
ten thousand people and a weekly market which attracts people 361
from the countryside and the neighboring towns, this is not
enough to sustain it. Its port is now comparatively little used [162]
for the export of sugar, which in most cases goes directly to [443]
Salvador by train from the factories. [497]

The immediate cause for the decay of the town of Vila Recôncavo,
and to a great extent that of Centro and of so many 175
other older towns, was the loss of functions after the period 178
of frontier growth. Those towns which had been religious centers
lost this function. Military posts were no longer needed, 361
and administrative activities became more restricted as the
counties were cut down in size and as the state and federal
governments took over more functions, such as schools and
health programs. Railroads and trucks have lately reduced 175
the importance of the port towns. The rural towns no longer 178
interest the wealthy rural aristocracy who always dominated
and supported them. More rapid transportation has made it 361
possible for this class to move about from plantation or factory 489
to the town or the city and back in one day instead of
three, thus removing the need for a town house in which to
spend the night. Better transportation has also made it possible
for the other classes to go to Salvador easily for shopping,
medical purposes, festivals, and visiting. Thus Salvador,
because of its nearness and the relative ease of transportation,
has taken on many of the functions of the rural

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[9] Ibid., Letter XIII, p. 501 (author's translation).

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361 county seats, functions which they would still fulfill if they
489 were farther removed from the state capital.

175 161 361 178 Finally, and perhaps most important of all, there has been a population shift in the last half century. New centers of population and industry have appeared in the Recôncavo, and there has been a refocusing of commercial activity but no accompanying administrative reform. The old towns, such as Vila Recôncavo, have remained as county seats to carry on administrative duties and the pretense of being the center of municipal activity. Official statistics indicate a great predominance of rural inhabitants in the Recôncavo. Actually, however, much of the population lives in towns. Although these centers are not officially called towns, their pattern of living is urban and not rural. For example, the district of Richão in the county of Purificação reported in the 1940 census 442 urban and suburban inhabitants, and 9,369 rural inhabitants. This gives no indication of the existence of a large factory town which contains almost nine thousand people.

The older towns may in the long run prove to be more permanent than the newer centers, which for the most part are factory towns, for it is possible that some day in the future the factories may close, causing a complete dislocation. In the meantime towns such as Vila Recôncavo are left out of the new developments, without industry or commerce except what can be done on a small scale, such as fishing or the weekly market. Still known as the formal centers of their counties or districts, they retain their local bureaucratic functions.

175 178 621 Until the second half of the nineteenth century, the county was the principal community organization, and the town of Vila Recôncavo was the major center of attraction for its county. However, because of developments in the sugar industry, this older community structure began to change. These developments, which will be described in the next chapter, had the effect of further isolating the town of Vila Recôncavo from the main streams of life revolving about the sugar industry, which has always been the major feature of life in the Recôncavo. New developments in the industry caused new community alignments, the end results of which have been to leave the formal administrative centers, such as the town of Vila Recôncavo, out of rural community life to a very great degree. In the next chapter the history of the rural area will be discussed, linking together the town and the rural area.

3. History of the Rural Area

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THE HISTORY of the development of the rural area of Vila Recôncavo is more or less representative of that of most of the sugar area in the states of Bahia, Alagoas, and Pernambuco, and consists of two major aspects. It is first of all the history of the sugar-cane industry in Brazil, and secondly the social, economic, and political record of the people who grew the cane.

The Bahian Recôncavo occupies a unique position in Brazil, for its history is as long as that of what is today the nation. From 1549 until 1763 Salvador was the capital of the new and prosperous Portuguese colony. The Recôncavo, because of its proximity to Salvador, and because of the excellent transportation facilities provided by the Bay of All Saints, was the only part of Brazil in easy communication with the capital city. Although the governors general were occupied with the settlement of other far-flung places in the colony and with the raiding and pirating of the French, English, and Dutch, their first or at least closest worries were those of settling and exploiting Bahia and its immediate environs. 175 249* By the end of the first fifty years of activity, most of the Recôncavo had been wrested from the wilderness; and, although not free from molestation by the Indians for many more years, it was rapidly planted in sugar cane. As noted earlier, sugar at this time was a luxury item in Europe and brought a very high price. In the first century of its cultivation sugar cane made the fortunes of many people: the growers, the middlemen, the slavers, and the colonial governors.

[423] At the start of the colonial period land was given out in the form of grants which originally carried with them the idea of

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the responsibility of holders to colonize and develop their areas. The grants were as a rule very large, consisting of leagues of land rather than of acres. Only one grant could be made to a family. As a result the son of a man who was a holder of a grant either had to remain on his father's land or had to leave the province and go elsewhere to acquire land. The only remaining alternative was to forget about land and go into commerce or a profession. However, since the grants were so very large, the original holders were able to break them up, selling or renting parts, giving some to their married sons or daughters and yet retaining and cultivating enough to support themselves. Thus the original land grants were broken up, and several plantations were made of each.

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Engenho was the name given to the total plantation, as well as being the specific designation for the mill itself. Every plantation, regardless of whether it was inland or on the coast, needed two things: the soil known as massapê, and woods as close as possible to the mill to supply firewood for boiling the sugar-cane juice. Firewood soon became a crucial problem, one which has haunted the sugar industry for centuries. Conservation never was a Brazilian practice, and the tropical forests of the Recôncavo were soon stripped to feed the hungry mouths of the furnaces. As time went on it became necessary to import firewood by boat from wherever it could be found, which added greatly to the costs of producing sugar. The steam mill came much later and added further to the problem.

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At first the owner's house was a veritable fort, surrounded by bulwarks and stockades to resist Indian attacks, but by the end of the seventeenth century the need for this precaution had passed away and the plantation houses were assuming noble proportions. Many were imposing two-story buildings built of stone and mortar, the ground level generally being used as a storehouse and the master (senhor de engenho) and his family living on the upper floor. As a rule the Big House of the Recôncavo was situated so that there would be an excellent view from the windows, not only of the mill and slave quarters nearby but of the surrounding countryside. There was no sight so dear to the heart of a plantation master as that of fields of sugar cane, the leaves of many shades of green waving gently in the breeze.

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Frequently a chapel was connected with the house or built near it. Not very far away would be the mill, and nearby the

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slave quarters. The entire unit formed a small village, for 249*
each plantation needed many specialists--carpenters, iron- 361
smiths, bricklayers, coopers, sailors, fishermen, a barber, [463]
tailor, cowboy, chaplain--in addition to those whose trade was
that of making sugar. In the morning the agricultural workers,
cutters, and drivers went out to work in the fields, returning [567]
later in the day. Because of the size of the plantation and the
number of its slaves--which frequently reached two or three
hundred--the *casa grande*, settled among its royal palms and
overlooking the mill, the slave quarters, the chapel, and
other buildings, took on a distinct village appearance.

The owner and absolute ruler of these domains was the *sen-* 175
hor de engenho, a title which became a symbol of wealth and 249*
later of nobility. The *senhor de engenho* dominated Bahia, and 554
indeed all of the sugar-producing area of Alagoas and Pernam- 565*
buco, for many years, socially and politically, until sugar
was surpassed in importance by other crops and industries.
Even much later, however, when sugar was less profitable and
other activities surpassed it in economic importance to the na-
tion, the plantation master was still a prominent figure, at
least in northeastern Brazil.

Each unit was a complete entity in itself, with its *sobrado*, 175
chapel, mill, slave quarters, slaves, cane fields, pastures, 249*
oxen, and forest land. The pattern for the Recôncavo planta- 361
tion was set in the early years. Today many of the original [178]
boundary lines still exist, and the plantations have often kept
their original names. In addition to cultivating several units 175
of 700 to 1,000 acres within the land grant, the owner also 249*
often rented smaller parcels of land to *lavradores*--free in- 427
dividuals who with a few slaves cultivated a small amount of 565*
sugar cane which they sent to the plantation to be milled and
made into sugar. These people were the nearest approach to
small-scale farmers in the Recôncavo; however, they did not
own their own land and were completely dependent upon the
plantation master. There are many sad tales of small farmers
who were cheated by the master and virtually became his
slaves. They had to send their cane to his mill and often were
told the cane was dry, or sour, or that less had been sent
than they recorded. In all this it was necessary to take the
word of the plantation's bookkeeper. There was no court of
appeals--only the master, who represented law, order, and
justice in the Recôncavo.

As time went on the aspect of the *sesmaria* was lost, and [178]
the plantation complex became the principal characteristic.

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571 the plantation complex became the principal characteristic.
175 Marriages between the families of plantation owners brought
425 new alignments of property, some families acquiring more
58 land and others losing it through the natural processes of the
* marriage and growth of parts of families and the dying out of
249 others. Family became increasingly important. As a rule the
[594] conjugal family was large and the extended family enormous;
marriages between cousins, uncles, nieces, and other rel-
[596] atives were common. Social life was carried on between neigh-
boring plantations, and of course many marriages took place
as a result of these contacts, so that it was not infrequent to
find many plantations, both contiguous and scattered, owned
175 by the same family. As a rule each extended family had its
571 traditional plantation as a sort of home base, and the head of
596 the family frequently resided there, although not always. The
patriarch was generally granted great respect and prestige by
*249 the members of his family, both far and near.

565 Many who received land grants were the noblemen of the
175 province, and many of them were representatives of the gov-
ernment. In this way the plantation master was securely es-
*565 tablishing himself and his family not only in the Recôncavo
571 but also in the governmental hierarchy, and was often in a
*249 position to see that the government action did not adversely
[423] affect the interests of the sugar-cane growers. At any rate,
for several centuries social and political domination was in
the hands of a small group which gradually intermarried, al-
ways strengthening itself. Its members were, first and fore-
most, the landowning gentry; next in importance were profes-
sional people such as lawyers, doctors, clerics, educators,
[669] and politicians. Members of this group were also soldiers,
and in the War of Independence in 1822 the plantation masters
of Vila Recôncavo took a foremost part both personally and
financially, for which many were later honored by having roy-
al titles bestowed upon them.

175 As the small rural towns, and later the counties, grew, they
*249 also fell under the domination of one or several plantation
* masters. Not infrequently a feud would arise between two fam-
565 ilies to determine which was to be the dominant one. As the
578 plantation master prospered, he showed his wealth and power
with a degree of ostentation which was commented upon by
travelers and chroniclers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and
nineteenth centuries. The ruins of houses built at this time can
be seen today scattered throughout the coastal northeast.

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These houses (solares, or sobrados) were enormous, constructed of stone and mortar, with wooden floors and ceilings. Stone and wood were themselves a sign of wealth, since it was necessary to bring them from a great distance. The furniture was often of handworked rosewood. Affluence was especially shown in table service of silver, porcelain, and crystal, most of which was imported from Europe. Members of the families frequently dressed in fine damask silks and were adorned with fine jewelry of gold and precious stones. It was not unusual for the plantation master to dress a few of his favorite slaves almost as well as his family and to parade them to church as an indication of his wealth. Another method of demonstrating wealth was the support of churches, especially that of the Tertiary Order of Franciscans.

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The plantation master eventually lost his prominence. When the capital of the colony was moved from Bahia to Rio de Janeiro in 1763 he was no longer so politically powerful, except locally, for there was too much distance between him and the new capital. Transportation was poor and communication still poorer. Also, other crops--namely coffee, cotton, rubber, and finally cacao--became more valuable than sugar. The abolition of slavery in 1888 was the final blow to the power of the plantation master.

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It was usually admitted that the greatest wealth or source of wealth of the plantation master was his slaves. At first the Portuguese colonists tried to enslave the Indians and put them to work on the sugar plantations, but the Indians sickened and died off easily. There was also great opposition, on the part of the Jesuits, to the enslavement of Indians. The importation of African slaves seemed to be the solution. From the middle of the sixteenth century until about the middle of the nineteenth century ships plied back and forth from Bahia to the west coast of Africa, carrying tobacco, leather, and rum to be traded for slaves. The African slave always brought a higher price in the market in Bahia than did the Indian slave. It was considered that a normal plantation or mill of a thousand acres needed approximately two hundred slaves, divided among the fields, the mill, the various skills, and the house of the owner. In the nineteenth century the procurement of slaves became increasingly difficult as a result of European, North American, and even Brazilian opposition to slavery. In the mid-nineteenth century the slave trade was officially prohibited and the traffic became clandestine. The prices of slaves soared at this

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*249 time and remained high until the 1888 decree which ended slavery completely. Before this time there had already been a great deal of manumission.

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571 In fact, it is distinctive of the entire region that the relations between the whites and the slaves were relatively warm and intimate. Gilberto Freyre describes the intimacy between the moleque (little Negro boy) and the master's son as playmates, between the master's wife and her domestics, between the Negro nursemaid and her white charges, between Negroes and whites in other close relationships on these plantations. A good deal of race mixture occurred. It is still a joke in this region to say that a particular plantation owner "populated the area."

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[654] The crises through which the sugar industry passed during its four-hundred-year history are interesting and worthy of consideration. During the first fifty years of production (until early in the seventeenth century), the sugar industry prospered and expanded. It was a "period of formation, official protection, and government stimulation, during which the liberties of production, transportation, prices and commerce suffered little or no restrictions."[1]

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648 The seventeenth century, however, was full of crises, one of the greatest being the war with Holland. In 1624 the Dutch attempted to capture Bahia but were repulsed. However, they sailed along the shores of the Bay of All Saints, burning and sacking plantations and setting fire to the cane fields. In the north the Dutch succeeded in capturing Pernambuco, which they retained for twenty-four years, also engaging in the production of sugar. In 1644 the Dutch governor, Maurice of Nassau, was recalled to Holland, and the colony was left undirected. The Brazilians revolted and recaptured Pernambuco.

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[458] In 1666 there was an epidemic of smallpox in the Recôncavo which reduced the slave population and left many plantation owners without laborers. There followed a period of near-famine for some years, due to the lack of food-plant cultivation. While this situation continued, plantation masters frequently mortgaged their plantations in order to buy new

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[1] J. Wanderley de Araujo Pinho, Historia de um engenho do Recôncavo, 1552-1944 (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), p. 193. The following three paragraphs are a condensation of the material contained in pp. 193-220 (author's translation).

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slaves and equipment. Thus began a long series of mortgages which continued for several centuries. The commercial agents in the city, for the most part representatives of Portuguese companies, loaned money to the plantation owners, using the next crop as collateral. They also charged high interest rates. When the next crop did not materialize, nor the next, the plantation owners found themselves inextricably in debt. At the same time the sugar market in Portugal was lost because the sugar was arriving there in a spoiled condition due to poor transportation, a cargo at times taking two years to arrive at its destination. Furthermore, the prices of most necessities were rising, and, in addition, Portugal began to tax the colonists heavily.

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In the early 1700's there was a more prosperous phase, due to higher prices for sugar in Europe. Many plantations were reconstructed, enlarged, and modified, and new ones were built. As a result many people went into debt again. During the eighteenth century two major factors turned against the prosperity of the sugar-cane growers: competition in the European market with the French, Spanish, and British, who were now producing sugar on their Caribbean islands; and the discovery of gold in the western part of Brazil. Sugar could be shipped to Europe more rapidly from the Caribbean than from Brazil. It was subject to less spoilage, and there was also probably less governmental interference. As soon as the European market was flooded with sugar, the price fell.

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The discovery of gold in Minas Gerais further dislocated the sugar industry of the Recôncavo at the time when it could least afford it. The prices of slaves, metals, cloth, cattle, horses, and all the necessities of life increased. Many of the freemen who worked in the plantations in administrative capacities were enticed away to the mines by the promise of great wealth. The need for slaves at the mines was great, and traders who sold slaves preferred to sell them to the miners, who could pay cash, rather than to the plantation owners, who frequently paid in sugar. During this time there was also a serious shortage of foodstuffs, for many of the smaller farmers who normally raised food crops emigrated to Minas Gerais.

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The agriculturalists--those who planted tobacco as well as those who planted sugar--were still being pressed by high taxes. There are many letters and documents from the governing bodies of the colony, addressed to the Portuguese king, telling him of the deplorable situation in which sugar planters

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found themselves, with no food, their slaves dying, the price of sugar falling, the markets lost, and, especially, overburdening taxes. Most of the documents which remain are pessimistic ones, for during the times of prosperity little was written. At any rate, late in the eighteenth century some measures were taken to lighten the burden of taxation and to provide better means of transportation to Europe than the irregular system of fleets which were frequently spaced two and three years apart. As a result, many plantation owners took heart and applied themselves again to the raising of sugar cane. They were further aided by an increasing market in Europe, which finally became almost entirely theirs at the turn of the century, as a result of the European wars.

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By the end of the Napoleonic wars sugar production was at its best, and Bahia was once again experiencing a pleasurable prosperity. However, 1822 brought the War of Independence, much of it fought in the Recôncavo. The war was supported to a great extent by the plantation masters, both financially and physically. Although they gained a great deal of prestige, they lost two harvests, and their exports fell off greatly. It took them some time to recuperate, and in 1855 they suffered another violent blow, an epidemic of cholera.

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An indication of the difficulties caused by the epidemic is given in the following passage, translated from a document in the inventory of the Baron of Caju made upon the death of his wife, a victim of cholera:

> The family was in a good state of animation and prosperity in 1855, when the fatal epidemic of cholera morbus wasted this Province, invading the home of the Inventoried and causing him horrible damages and enormous losses! The Baroness fell victim to this voracious scourge! Eighty-two of the most valuable and useful slaves had the same fate; the best expediencies, treatment, and vigilant care were of no effect! Almost the entire harvest of this fatal year was lost in the complete absence of field hands, for the number not stricken was small, and the others, convalescents, were truly specters! The harvests of 1856 and 1857 also suffered.

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Soon afterwards a new phase began when the Civil War started in the United States, sending up the price of sugar and increasing the market. Some years after this a disease

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struck the sugar cane itself, and production again dropped 249* greatly. At the same time, coffee began to attract attention in São Paulo and the few slaves for sale were sent there, [731] where they commanded a higher price, thereby causing a shortage of workmen in the Recôncavo. [464] In 1888 a final blow was the abolition of slavery. Production dropped to a new low, and the twentieth century was entered during what was called the gravest crisis the industry had ever experienced.

During the late nineteenth century there were several attempts to better the machinery used in the fabrication of sugar. [177] New methods were introduced from abroad, and at the turn of the century the usina made its first appearance on the scene. The usina represents the large-scale central factory, designed to mill the cane of many plantations, thereby raising the total sugar production.[2] The state government took a hand [654] and financed the construction of three factories which were given to various individuals as concessions. There was an effort to revive the industry on a different and stronger basis. At the same time, however, the Recôncavo, as well as other parts of Brazil, felt the pull of the rubber boom in the Amazon and lost some of its manpower. But once again a European war came to the rescue, and during the second and third decades of this century the sugar industry prospered. Many factories were erected, and there was a definite feeling of optimism, which ended abruptly in 1929 and 1930 as a result of prolonged overproduction. In 1933 the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol was established by the national government to regulate production. The new regulations caused dissatisfaction and disputes, and production fell off sharply, only to rise again after World War II when many of the restrictions imposed by the institute were lifted. At the present time the Recôncavo seems to be experiencing a mild phase of affluence.

It is the introduction of the large-scale central factory which 175 holds the most interest for us in this recital of crises, for it 249* was this innovation which brought the maximum amount of 178 change to the town and the entire community structure.

The factory was conceived of as a large mechanized mill,

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[2] Hereafter, the word "factory" will be used to designate the usina; wherever the word "factory" appears it should be understood to mean sugar-cane milling factory, unless otherwise qualified. (Editor's note.) [104]

175 178 *249 [473] located in a position where it could grind the cane of many plantations. The two aspects of the sugar industry, the agricultural and the industrial, were to be separated. The cane was to be planted, cultivated, and harvested by one group of people; these were the former plantation masters, who under the new system became simply suppliers of sugar cane (fornecedores de cana) to the mill. The cane was then milled, processed, and marketed by another group of people, a corporate body which became personified as the usineiro.

175 *249 473 433 However, this division did not last long, for the modern up-to-date machinery of the new factories proved capable of grinding more cane than the planters were supplying. Because of their poor financial conditions and loss of laborers due to the abolition of slavery and the consequent resettlement of the former slaves, the planters were not able to expand their sugar-cane production enough to meet the demands of the factories. In other cases the planters resented the new factories and simply refused to cooperate, continuing to operate their outmoded mills in spite of adverse conditions. As a result, the corporations began buying plantations of their own, situated as near their mills as possible, in order to assure themselves of a larger supply of cane, and to lessen their dependence upon the individual planters.

175 *249 425 473 There was an epoch when the hunger for land seemed insatiable. The usineiros not only had funds at their disposal which could be used for the purchase of land, but also had the means of forcing individual planters to sell their land to the corporation. By refusing to mill the cane of the planter, or by taking his cane and then letting it sour, and by various other methods, the usineiros were able to force many planters into bankruptcy, after which the corporation bought the land. Also, many planters who continued to depend upon their own efforts, producing sugar in their old-style mills, gradually went into bankruptcy, since they could not compete with the improved product of the new factories.

175 *249 473 [178] In effect the factory system in Vila Recôncavo is an enlarged agricultural-industrial combination, an engenho enlarged many times over. The ownership pattern has changed; whereas the engenho was owned by a family, and therefore subject to transfer on the death of the owner, the usina is a corporation, which continues despite the death of stockholders. As will be shown later, however, the corporation may even be a family. The plantation master, owner of lands and of slaves and ruler of

175 249* 473 small empires, disappeared. But in his place an even more powerful figure appeared, the _usineiro_, the land-factory combination director and representative of corporate power.

[178] 175 249* 433 [656] However, not all private plantations succumbed to pressure from the factories or to economic collapse. There are many which still continue to plant and cultivate sugar cane and send it to the factory for milling. After 1933 the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol prescribed the amount of sugar cane each plantation, whether private or corporate, could produce, and indicated the total amount of sugar each factory could produce and how much cane it had to accept from each plantation. As a result of this protection, many private plantations continue to function in equilibrium with the factory to which they send their sugar cane. The private plantation owners also have a separate association which looks after their interests.

175 249* 178 Thus the twentieth century has seen the introduction and development of the factory system and in its wake a series of fundamental changes. The growth of factory towns (the _usina_ nuclei) has created further competition for the older county seats, such as the town of Vila Recôncavo, and further disintegration of the former community structure.

175 178 249* 423 Since its discovery and settlement, the rural area of Vila Recôncavo has been the scene of sugar-cane planting and sugar making. The rural area was settled before the town of Vila Recôncavo, and the plantation nuclei were actually self-sufficient small towns in themselves. The landowning pattern in this rural area has gone full cycle. First were the large land grants which were then split up into separate _engenhos_ (after 1889 known as _fazendas_) through division due to inheritance, sale, or donation. For about three hundred years the pattern of the area was that of the _engenho_. However, at the end of the nineteenth century, this way of life came to an end as a result of financial crises and the abolition of slavery. The twentieth century has seen the introduction of the factory, which has led to a concentration of lands again under single ownership, although this time corporate and not that of a single individual or family.

175 178 249* 621 During the epoch of the plantations there was a necessity for the existence of the town to serve the needs of the landowning class. The community during this time was focused to a large extent toward the county seat. But with the abolition of slavery, the disappearance of the plantation master and his large family, and the coming of the factory, the former com-

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munity structure began to break up. The corporations gradually acquired plantations which became commercial enterprises. The Big House was no longer the home of a master and the scene of his family life and social activities. The top level of the social strata partially disappeared, and those who were left to do the agricultural work looked now to the factory for their instructions and pay, to the new factory store for supplies, and to the chalet of the usineiro as the new senhor and patron. The owners of single plantations who joined the factory networks also began to look to the factory nucleus for social life, for buying supplies, and for selling their cane and receiving their money.

Thus each factory slowly became the focus of a new community structure, composed of the nucleus--the factory, the store, and the director's and workers' houses--surrounded by the corporation plantations, each of which still preserves the former plantation pattern of settlement, plus the private plantations, which are little changed in appearance from the days of the engenho. The factory towns, however, did not take over the formal functions of the county seats. In fact, rarely have factory towns received formal recognition as towns by the government. For the most part the factory nuclei appear on official records only as plantations.

Because of the growth of the factory and its surrounding network of plantations, the new community structures of the Recôncavo have taken on almost circular appearances. Vila Recôncavo demonstrates this well. In the spaces between the circles which represent factory systems, may be found the old formal administrative towns, with little of the influence or attraction that they once had. And yet they are bureaucratically important to the functioning of the county. As a result of this breakup of the old community structure, a process which is still going on, there is now no definite, clearcut community center in Vila Recôncavo.

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Migrant sugar-cane workers, late afternoon

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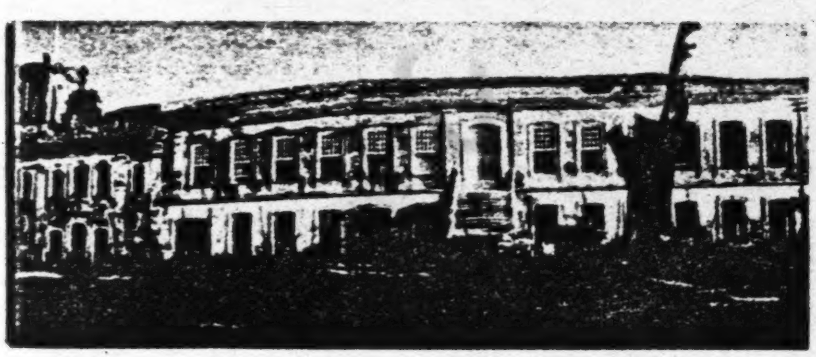

[P. 45]

Big House and chapel, symbol of the past

4. Plantation Life

*249 178 THE GOLDEN AGE of the sugar industry was typified by the plantation complex, which was accompanied by a definite way of life. The final breakdown of this complex came at the end of the nineteenth century with the creation of the large central mill. Changes in the agricultural practices, however, have only begun to take place. Almost all the emphasis of change in the past was placed on the development of the technical aspects of processing the cane, and very little attention was given to the agricultural side of the industry.

*249 361 178 [464] Modern plantations continue to be relatively self-sufficient units, just as the engenhos were. The factories brought almost no change in the land settlement patterns of the area. Since they were established on the site of former plantations, they did not create new nuclei; rather, they simply enlarged the old centers. Some of the former slave population moved to those factories which needed more workmen. But in subsequent years there was a gradual resettlement of the former slaves on the old plantations, in the same locations and even at times in the same buildings.

The disappearance of the small smokestacks of many plantation mills and the appearance of the more widely scattered but far larger ones of the factories, together with the appearance of networks of narrow gauge railways radiating out from the factories, mark the major changes in the landscape of the Recôncavo. The outlines of the new plantations and their boundaries remain much the same as they were a hundred or more years ago. The former small mills are frequently still used as workshops and sheds for the oxcarts.

[illegible] The following discussion will examine one of the five pri-

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The following discussion will examine one of the five private plantations in the community of Vila Recôncavo and will then describe the network of factory plantations in the same community. 128

The Private Plantation: Fazenda das Moças

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The Fazenda das Moças ("G" on map of community) is typical of a privately owned plantation in all respects but one. Its owner is a lady who assumed active direction of the plantation after her husband's death. At first there was some difficulty in persuading the overseer of the plantation to take orders from a woman, for he felt his prestige was lowered in the eyes of the workmen as well as the overseers of neighboring plantations. However, after three or four years, Dona Sinhá, in cooperation with "Seu"[1] Paulo, the overseer, has made an outstanding success of her plantation, and the original friction between the two has greatly diminished. Below is an inventory of the Fazenda das Moças: 249* 562 466 [558]

249* 423

Extent: 930 tarefas,[2] mostly of massapê, 450 of which are under sugar-cane cultivation, the rest consisting of pasture and small gardens

Water: 4 drinking tanks for livestock
2 small freshwater streams
(Drinking water must be brought from a neighboring plantation, which has a spring well known in the area for the salubrious qualities of its water.) [312]

Houses: 45 workers' houses [342]
Owner's house, with living room, dining room, 4 bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom, 2 maids' rooms, 2 other dependencies, veranda; surrounded by orchard
1 overseer's house
1 house formerly used as a school

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[1] "Seu" is a corruption of Senhor and is a title often given to persons of some prestige. [576] [554]

[2] The tarefa is the unit of land measurement used in Bahia. It equals 900 square braças. The braça equals 6 feet, which gives the tarefa 32,400 square feet. This is 11,160 square feet less than one acre. [804]

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*249 [423] 1 new, rural school, with rooms for classes and living quarters for teacher, constructed by the state on land donated by Dona Sinhá

[435] **Value of the plantation:** Cr$1.500.000,00.[3]

*249 422 **Equipment:**
- 1 Caterpillar tractor, model D2
- 1 John Deere plow
- 1 jeep
- 2 four-wheeled, rubber-tired wagons
- 9 _juntas_ of oxen (the _junta_ equals ten oxen, eight in use and two resting)
- 9 two-wheeled carts drawn by oxen--the antique and most used transportation in the Recôncavo
- 30 burros for carrying cane
- 12 saddle horses
- 35 milk cows and breeding mares
- 78 cattle for breeding purposes

*249 407 [493] [177] [412] The Fazenda das Moças is unusual in its possession of a tractor, a mechanical plow, and a jeep. (Even more recently a second tractor and a mechanical cultivator have been added.) More commonly the _pai adão_ (Father Adam) plow is used, drawn by eight oxen. According to Pinho the plow was introduced into Brazil in the late eighteenth century. Before this all cultivation was done with the hoe.[4] For the past 150 years the _pai adão_ has been used primarily to open the rows in which the sugar cane is planted. All the rest of the cultivation is done by hand, with the hoe and billhook. The _pai adão_ is a simple plow with a single plowshare. When it is drawn by oxen, a [461] driver is needed, plus a small boy helper and another man to manage the plow. When it is drawn by tractor, only two men are needed, the driver and the plowman. Various properties of the soil, such as its hardness in the summer when it dries, its swamplike character during the rainy season, and the danger of turning up the infertile _tauá_ which underlies the shallow layer of _massapê_, have made plowing difficult in the Re-

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[436] [3] The _cruzeiro_ (Cr$) is the Brazilian monetary unit and equals roughly five cents in United States currency. Thus the value of the plantation is approximately $75,000.00.

[4] de Araujo Pinho, _Historia de um engenho do Recôncavo, 1522-1944_ (Rio de Janeiro, 1946), p. 243.

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côncavo. So far only the *pai adão* has been able to fulfill the 249*1
plowing requirements. Lately, however, tractors with cat- 407
erpillar tread have been introduced and, when used carefully [492]
with disk plows, have given excellent results. But the old
standby is still commonly in use, hitched to eight, ten, twelve,
or as many as twenty oxen.

The owner's house with its park stands on a small hilltop 249*
and is visible from afar because of its imperial palms. Near- 361
by, on another hilltop, is the settlement of workers, a long
street with houses on either side, the barracks, a small [252]
store, and the ever-present *casa de farinha*, the house where [262]
manioc is always being ground, pressed, and roasted to make
the farina which is the staple food of the area. Also on this 249*
street is the overseer's house, which stands out from the oth-
ers because of its large size and its veranda. The houses of 342
the workmen are small and built for the most part under one
long, common roof. Each house is really an apartment con-
sisting of a front living room and a long corridor going back
to the kitchen, with one or two bedrooms leading off the cor-
ridor. Other houses, under separate roofs, have similar in-
terior arrangements. The roofs are of red tiles, the rest of
the house of clay mud (*taipa*) slapped on both sides of a bam-
boo framework. After the mud has dried a coat of whitewash [356]
is applied. The houses are built and kept in repair by the plan-
tation owner and do not belong to the workers. The floors are [423]
of beaten earth, difficult to keep clean. At night, when only a [416]
tiny oil lamp is burning, the houses look dark and gloomy.

After dark one has the impression of hearing much more 249*
than one can see. Kerosene is expensive to burn, no one
reads, and most of life is geared to doing in the daytime those 517
tasks which require light. At night the workmen and their fam-
ilies sit in the dark talking, or perhaps go to the *casa de far-
inha* where a fellow workman and his family may be grinding
their manioc. This building is softly lit with kerosene lamps
and there is a cheerful glow from the roasting fire. More re-
cently the overseer's house has been equipped with electric-
ity, and now it is always well lighted at night. His new radio
has become a center of attraction and small groups form about
his veranda, listening. At the other end of the street, during
harvest time, there is always a bonfire in front of the bar-
racks where the migrant workers are sheltered. On special [535]
occasions there may be a *samba* (dance), perhaps in the plan-
tation owner's house. Then everyone dons his best and the

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*249 Then everyone dons his best and the
517 women dance while the men play the drums, tambourines, and
535 cavaquinhos (a ukelelelike instrument) or simply stand around
watching, gossiping and "passing the branquinha" (the local
534 white rum).

273 There is a hierarchy of personnel on the plantation, which
starts with the owner, Dona Sinhá, and her family. On other
*249 plantations the owner is also sometimes a lawyer, doctor, or
engineer whose main interests, both economic and social, are
463 in the city of Salvador. This is not always the case, however,
for many owners are only rural proprietors, as is Dona Sinhá.
[221] But it is always considered a sacrifice to be obliged to
spend the winter on one's plantation. It has been a traditional prerogative of the plantation master to spend the winter in the city, and it is one of the traditions kept up today by the planters. However, as soon as the rains show signs of abating in August or September, Dona Sinhá appears on the scene, generally grateful for her release from the city and from the round of anniversaries, parties, and official functions she feels called upon to attend while there.

This aspect of partial absenteeism has given rise to the next rung in the hierarchical ladder: the overseer. As such he is a relatively new phenomenon, but he has actually been part of the scene for a long time. At the time of the engenho, the feitor-mor, or head foreman, frequently occupied the place of today's overseer. Seu Paulo is the focal point for most activities on Fazenda das Moças. It is he who puts into action Dona Sinhá's plans, for he has the greatest contact with the workers in the fields and at home, on the arruado (the street on which the houses are located). During the time Dona Sinhá is away he is ruler of the plantation (dono da terra).

*249 Seu Paulo rose from the workers' ranks; he is familiar with
all aspects of sugar-cane cultivation, and is able to handle
463 men and to deal with the owner as well as with the workers.
159 He is a dark mulatto, about forty-six years old, with a large
family. He is sought after by the workers as godfather to their children. He rents a small piece of land on which he raises his own sugar cane. He has his own burros, oxen, and carts, which he rents to Dona Sinhá during the harvest season. Although unable to read or write, he can do figures in his head in an astounding fashion. He dresses well, in what is sometimes thought to be an attempt to imitate the plantation master of bygone days, while Dona Sinhá and her family have adopted a more comfortable garb for the country--"modo ameri-

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cano." He spends most of his day in the saddle, riding from 249*
one point of operation to another; going to the sugar mill to 463
straighten out this or that matter, such as the nonappearance 159
of railroad cars at the plantation loading point; caring for the troubles of the workers; and looking to his own interests.

Below these two figures of authority is a salaried man who 249*
stands only slightly apart from the bulk of the workers, the 463
foreman (feitor), Asclepiades. It is his duty to keep track of 465
how much work is done each day and by whom. He walks about the plantation, from field to field, measuring with the six-foot stick he carries and marking down in his notebook the amount of work done by each man. The plantation laborers are paid according to how much each of them weeded, or planted, or to how many tons of cane each cut or conducted to the factory. Asclepiades writes it down in his little black book, and it appears on the daily work sheet which in turn is transferred to the fortnightly payroll. During harvest time the records of who was the driver and who the guide, of how much sugar cane was cut and by whom, are kept at each end of the plantation where the carts must pass to be weighed before the cane is transferred to the factory. It is Seu Paulo's duty every morning to assign tasks to the workmen, while Asclepiades keeps track of how much is done but does not see that it gets done, for this is the duty of the overseer. The foreman is paid a monthly salary of one thousand cruzeiros, and although he does not occupy the position of prestige which the overseer has there is always the chance that he may become an overseer either on that plantation or on another.

There is one other salaried person on the plantation--the 249*
cowboy (vaqueiro) João who receives four hundred cruzeiros 463
a month, plus room and board. João takes care of the cattle, 233
milk cows, and saddle horses. He must also inspect the fences constantly and report any breaks, and whenever possible retrieve animals which have broken out of the pasture and wandered into the cane fields, where they cause great damage. As a rule the pastures are fenced, as are new cane plantations, but the established cane fields are left unguarded. Fences do not last more than one season, for the posts rot because of the
wet soil, and the barbed wire rusts quickly. João is also the 249*
constant companion of the plantation owner when she is pres- 463
ent, accompanying her or her children or guests on pleasure rides, meeting the train or boat with horses for guests or business acquaintances, and getting the mail from the post office in

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*249 463 [578] [466] the town of Vila Recôncavo. João lives in the owner's house, enjoying her confidence to a greater degree than anyone else except perhaps the overseer. This is frequently the cause of friction between the cowboy and overseer, and this fact is not helped by the fact that João is an inlander (sertanejo), a true cowboy, taciturn and independent, from the cattle country to the north of Recôncavo. When Dona Sinhá is away, he occupies a different position, subject to the orders of Seu Paulo unless Dona Sinhá has left definite instructions for him. When Dona Sinhá is present he receives orders directly from her, bypassing the overseer. João is in a position to check on much of the plantation activity, bringing to the owner's attention any necessary works forgotten by Seu Paulo.

*249 464 162 Below the owner, overseer, foreman, and cowboy are the bulk of the resident workmen (moradores). On the Fazenda das Moças, there is a population of slightly over two hundred men, women, and children, providing a working force of between sixty and seventy men and boys, plus a few women who occasionally do light work in the fields.

*249 461 465 Below is an extract from one of the fortnightly pay sheets of the plantation. A brief explanation of the list, beginning at the top, will give a good idea of at least a part of the work on a plantation in this community. The "second weeding of a cane field" indicates that the man worked in a field which had already been weeded once since planting. Depending upon the amount of sunshine and rain and the quality of the weeding done, a field may have to be weeded as many as seven times between harvests. A cane field (taboleiro) varies from ten to twenty tarefas, and each field is numbered. Seu Paulo can therefore assign a man to weed a certain field, and they will both know whether it is the first, second, third, or other weeding. The weedings become progressively more difficult so that the amount paid per unit increases with the number of weedings. Weeding constitutes one of the major expenditures on Fazenda das Moças, as it is done slowly with a hoe. As with all other tasks on the plantation, there is a set price for this work.

"Carrying seed" indicates the transference of bundles of tops of sugar-cane stalks from a field where they are cut to another where they are planted. The amount paid per trip increases with the distance the man must travel between fields. As a rule, several fields of cane are planted to be used exclusively for seed. The next item on the list, "cutting seed,"

Ricardo Teixeira	2nd weeding of cane field	13 1/2	braças*	at	Cr$ 3,50	Cr$ 47,25
Julio Bispo	digging drainage ditch	30	meters	at	1,50	45,00
Paulo Manoel	carrying seed	12	trips	at	0,80	9,60
José Santo	cutting seed	5	loads	at	0,80	4,00
S. Santo	cutting out cattle	1	day	at	15,00	15,00
Malaquias Ario	trip to neighboring plantation	1	trip	at	10,00	10,00
Mario Adriano	3rd weeding of cane field	249	braças	at	3,70	921,30
F. Cramosa	planting	3 1/2	braças	at	2,20	7,70
Cecilio Argolo	replanting	65	braças	at	1,50	97,50
Paulo Manoel	carpentering	3	days	at	23,00	69,00
Sancho Santiago	repairing estiva	1	day	at	12,00	12,00
Paulo Souza	1st weeding of cane field	35	braças	at	3,20	112,00
Agostinho Batista	catching escaped cattle	2		at	10,00	20,00
Mario Serra	repairing fences	250	braças	at	0,15	37,50
Maria das Dores	gathering cane leaves for animal fodder	4	cartloads	at	2,00	8,00
Francisco Julião	loading railway wagon with sugar cane	1/2	day	at	7,50	7,50
Pedro Julio	cutting bamboo	12	mãos†	at	5,00	60,00
Francisco Brito	conducting load of wood	1	load	at	15,00	15,00
Crispim Argolo	repairing barracks	2 1/2	days	at	12,00	30,00
Domingos Moura	gardening	12	days	at	10,00	120,00
Osorio Ancieto	burying a burro	1	day	at	12,00	12,00
Pedro Julio	carrying water	1	day	at	10,00	10,00

*The braça equals 6 feet and is the measurement always used locally in the cane fields.
†Mão is a bundle of fifty and is used locally in speaking of fence posts and ears of corn.

[804]

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*249 461 465 indicates work done in these fields. The top of the stalk just below the leaves is used as seed.

"Cutting out cattle" refers to selecting cattle from the herd to be used for the day's transportation. The "trip to neighboring plantation" means that Malaquias was sent to another plantation on an errand either for Dona Sinhá or for Seu Paulo on some plantation business, such as to get the payroll sheets, which are made up by a resident of another plantation. "Planting" means the first planting of sugar cane, while "replanting" means planting cane in the spaces where the first seed did not grow, either because it was buried too deeply, or because after planting it received too much sunshine or too much rain. Such spaces are always filled in when the new cane reaches a height of several inches.

[463] "Carpentering," a craft, commands a higher salary than agricultural work. Sometimes a plantation keeps a carpenter on a regular salary; at other times he is hired from the factory, as is the case here. His work may be on the wooden carts used for transportation or on any of the many houses of the plantation.

[491] An estiva is a type of makeshift bridge crossing a drainage ditch or a low spot on the road where water collects during the rainy season. It is usually no more than four or five yards long and a yard or two wide. The lengthwise pieces are bamboo with other pieces of the same material laid across them close together. Then earth is placed on top and smoothed off. These bridges require constant repair work. During the height of the rainy season they often break up entirely and float away. They are often quite perilous for horses, burros, and oxen, whose legs sometimes go through the bamboo latticework.

[233] "Catching escaped cattle" requires some agility on the part of the person who does it. It is usually done on foot, and if the ox or cow is in a cane field it must be worked out carefully in order not to destroy too much of the standing sugar cane. "Repairing fences" accompanies catching escaped cattle, for the animals often break through the fences enclosing their pastures. The fence posts are usually of bamboo, which rots quickly and must be constantly watched and replaced as it shows signs of weakening. "Cutting bamboo" is done for many [824] different ends. Most plantation boundary lines are marked by rows of graceful bamboos whose wood is used for fence posts and estivas, as well as for the wicker framework of the mud-covered houses.

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249* 461 465 [462] [233]

Maria das Dores, whose name is listed as "gathering cane leaves for animal fodder," does the only type of work on the plantation done by women other than housework and gardening. When a field of cane is cut, the tops of the stalks and the long leaves are cut off and left on the ground. The very tip of the stalk is used as seed, while the heavier part is loaded on carts and sent to the factory. When natural pasturage gives out because of overgrazing or drought, the cattle's diet is supplemented with the freshly cut, green cane leaves; if the tender tips are not required for seed, they are also fed to the cattle. Gathering the leaves and stalk tips is relatively light work, and if a woman on the plantation wants to supplement her husband's income this is the task assigned her. Few women on this plantation do it, however, for it is a point of pride with any husband that he is capable of supporting his wife without her having to do gainful work. Only a small number of leaves are gathered up, and the remainder are burned as they lie in the field. Burning is done at night when there is little or no wind, and often during the summer fires which extend for acres dot the countryside. Burning is a traditional practice. Although professional agronomists insist that it is injurious to the cane roots and the new shoots, planters continue to burn the unwanted leaves, feeling that the ash provides some fertilization.

[244]

"Gardening" refers to work done in the vegetable garden which supplies Dona Sinhá's house. This garden stands in contrast to the roças, which are planted by the workers as well as by Dona Sinhá, and which are reserved for beans, manioc, corn, and some tobacco. Such plants as lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, and other vegetables are disdained by the workers and are grown only for Dona Sinhá.

[312] [857] [492]

"Carrying water" is usually work reserved for a small boy. Mounted on a donkey with four wooden kegs he rides to the neighboring plantation, Pedras, which belongs to the factory, fills the kegs at the spring, and returns to Fazenda das Moças where he puts the water into the various large clay containers in the kitchen and washrooms of the owner's house. "Oh, Pedro, there's no water" is a common cry heard in Dona Sinhá's house.

249* 466 [427] [492]

There are few rules restricting the workers. Their services must be at the disposal of Dona Sinhá whenever required. Other than that, if during a slack season a man finds an opportunity to work somewhere else, he is free to do so. If he has a burro, or oxen, he has the right to pasture them on the

*249 lands of the plantation, renting them to Dona Sinhá at harvest
466 time for transport. Often a family has one or two pack horses
or burros which can be used to transport cane or, at other
[427] times of the year, water or firewood. A worker also has the
right to a plot to raise food crops. If the man in the household
[492] dies or deserts his family, the woman who is left can do one
of several things: go to work in the field herself, the least
popular alternative; send her children out to work if they are
old enough; find another husband, which is not too difficult,
for there is a scarcity of women in this rural zone; or return
to her father's house.

*249 A group of workers who are essential to the well-being of
464 the plantation, but who are not residents, are the caatingueiros
(migrant workers from the scrubby forest area which borders
on the Recôncavo and extends into the desert to the north).
Hundreds of these men are available during the harvest season,
a time when not only the plantations but the factories
as well need more men than the resident population provides.
The town of Vila Recôncavo, the other small rural
towns, and the capital city do not supply agricultural workers
to the rural areas. The plantations use instead the migrants
from the north. A system has grown up whereby each plantation
and factory has a man who can contact these migrant laborers.
[571] This man is called the empreiteiro, a contractor who
has a system of contacts in the north usually through family
[466] and godparent relationships. The migrant workers are housed
in the barracks, and generally keep themselves well apart
from the residents. Only men come, leaving their families
at home to care for their small farms and livestock while they
earn money in the Recôncavo. None of these men appears on
the plantation payroll. It is the empreiteiro who contracts with
the overseer to have the required work done by the migrant
laborers. Usually this work consists only of weeding, which
must be done constantly but which at harvest time the resident
[465] workers cannot do. On the list of jobs and wages, above,
there appears the name of Mario Adriano, who received 921,30
cruzeiros for weeding 249 braças. This man is the empreiteiro,
who is paid for work done by fifteen, twenty, or more
men. He in turn pays the migrant laborers, giving them less
than the price for which he agreed with the overseer to do the
work. In this way the contractor earns a living. Throughout
the harvest season he gets work for about seventy-five to one
hundred migrants, who camp in and about the barracks and

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have little to do with the residents. At the end of the season 249*
they can be seen walking along the paths of the Recôncavo to- 464
ward the north, each man carrying over his shoulder a stick
from which is suspended a cloth bundle containing his few
possessions.

One prominent aspect of the relationships between people 249*
in this hierarchy is the intimacy and familiarity which has for 466
so long characterized the Recôncavo. While slavery was not
a benign institution anywhere, there was a softness in the 571
relations between the Brazilian and his slaves which seems [567]
to have been absent in other slave areas. This quality per-
sists today on private plantations such as Fazenda das Moças
between the owner and the workers. Dona Sinhá knows the res-
idents by name or nickname, knows their background and pres-
ent condition; the worker knows Dona Sinhá's family back-
ground, her children, and her extended family.

The former master is now the patron. It is she who arbi-
trates any differences between workers, or between a worker
and Seu Paulo. It is her task to protect the worker against in-
justices, to provide medical care, to aid at weddings and bap-
tisms, in short to do all the things the worker is unable to do
through ignorance, fear, or poverty.

The relationship between Dona Sinhá and Seu Paulo is a cu- 249*
rious one, for neither one of them can do without the other. The 463
role of overseer came into being for several reasons, the pri-
mary one being the absenteeism of the owner. In order to keep 466
the plantation running properly all year long it was necessary 571
for someone with knowledge and authority to be present all the
time; so the former feitor-mor became known as the over-
seer, with a house larger and better than that of anyone else
on the plantation except the owner. As time went on, the over-
seer gathered more and more rights and privileges unto him-
self, until today he is the veritable owner of the plantation in
all but the legal sense. He has the confidence and loyalty of [608]
the workmen, without which he would be a failure. He even-
tually becomes related to nearly all of them through the sys-
tem of godparentship; in fact, he is more sought after than [465]
the owner for this purpose. On the Fazenda das Moças, the
overseer is paid a higher salary than any other overseer in
the area--as much as Cr$1.500,00 a month in comparison
with Cr$1.000,00 or less for the others. In addition he re-
ceives a bonus at the end of the year, one cruzeiro for each
ton of sugar cane the plantation produced during the year.

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Dona Sinhá and other plantation owners feel that a plantation cannot be successful without a good overseer, and they also feel that the white man does not make a good overseer. They say he cannot stand the heat of the summer and the rain and mud of the winter when spending entire days in the saddle overseeing the work. Only the indefatigable mestiço is supposed to be able to take such punishment. The owners also say that only he can deal properly with the mestiço workers--that, being one himself, he knows their "foibles and tricks." To a certain extent the mestiço population seems to agree with this, for orders from the overseer are much more promptly obeyed than orders from the owner, and most of the workmen prefer to have the overseer explain what is wanted. It is also believed that the mestiço is stronger. For example, if Dona Sinhá has made a hard trip in the winter to get to the plantation the workers will sympathize with her, saying, "You came through all that rain and mud, and at night!" when the same trip may be a daily one for the overseer, the cowboy, or any of the workers.

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However, the creation of the position of overseer has also created a series of new problems for the owners. All owners now suspect their overseers of cheating them, and the control of the overseer is a subject which comes up frequently at social gatherings. Since the owner is absent from the plantation about half the year, there are many things which the overseer must do without consulting his employer. The owners will interpret independent action on the overseer's part as good management, mismanagement, or cheating, depending upon the results of the action. When the results are doubtful and there is any suspicion that the overseer might have gained money by his action, it is considered cheating. Very often the owners claim that the overseer and the foreman are "partners" working together against him.

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On one plantation in the community of Vila Recôncavo, the owner decided he would be his own overseer. He was young and had been born and brought up on the plantation. Within a few years his harvest had dropped to almost nothing, and lately he has changed to raising milk cows, at which he has not been particularly successful either. He himself, and all his friends, blame his lack of success on the lack of an overseer, saying that even though the old overseer had cheated and helped himself to what was not his, the plantation as a whole had not suffered as badly as it did without him.

As a result, owners have to be satisfied with higher costs 249*
than they feel necessary and less profit than they think possible,
the difference going to the overseer, rather than accept 463
the complete failure of the plantation Overseers, foremen, 466
and owners are all aware of the situation, but politeness, the
traditional respect patterns, and the unwillingness to compete 571
openly keep the situation covert.

Nevertheless, on Fazenda das Moças, in spite of these difficulties 249*
there is considerable cooperation between Dona Sinhá
and Seu Paulo. The duties of the overseer are confined generally 463
to the plantation itself--seeing that the work is done, 426
the cane planted, cultivated, harvested, and delivered to the
factory as expediently as possible. The duties of Dona Sinhá
are mainly concerned with finance, with arranging ready funds
to meet the current expenses of the plantation. The practice
of mortgaging crops did not end with the abolition of slavery,
and it is the owner's task to juggle funds, loans, and interest
so she will have enough money to improve and increase the
yield of her plantation. In general the owners of single plantations
rarely have enough funds to carry them through the
year. Payrolls are met throughout the year with advances on
the estimated harvest made by the factory, by the banks, or
by the Cooperative of Sugar-Cane Growers and Suppliers. Thus
when the season ends the owner is already in debt, part of
which he must pay off in order to finance the coming year.
There are two problems constantly present in the struggle to [433]
increase the size of the harvest: cost of production, and the
antiquated methods used on the private plantations, where
practically all work is done by hand.

Table 1 shows production, costs, and profits for the harvests 249*
of the years 1947-48, 1948-49, and 1949-50 at Fazenda das
Moças. The drop in production and the rise in costs in the 43
years 1948-49 were attributed to a slackening of the vigilance
of Dona Sinhá and to a poor overseer. It was at the end of this
year that Seu Paulo assumed the position of overseer of the
plantation. The following year showed a great improvement
which has continued, for the 1950-51 harvest produced 6,000
tons, the highest output of any private plantation in the Recôncavo.
Future harvests are expected to go well above this. In
addition to changing the overseer, and in the following year [426]
the foreman, Dona Sinhá was able to borrow enough money to [407]
purchase the tractor mentioned earlier. The next year, as a
result of the evident success of the new combination, two four- [493]

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Private Plantation]

*249 43

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION, COSTS, PROFITS: FAZENDA DAS MOÇAS

1947-1948	
4,000 tons of cane at the selling price of Cr$81,40 a ton	Cr$325.600,00
Cost of production	206.244,00
Profit	119.356,00
1948-1949	
2,500 tons of cane at Cr$88,90	*222.250,00*
Cost of production	225.198,00
Loss	32.948,00
1949-1950	
5,000 tons of cane at Cr$107,40	537.000,00
Cost of production	319.248,00
Profit	217.751,00

[407] [493] wheeled carts were added which could be drawn by the tractor, thus cutting down transportation costs. Recently a jeep was acquired to pull the carts, and a second tractor equipped with the mechanism to cultivate cane fields was purchased.

*249 43 178 [426] Still, the plantation is heavily in debt, and any profits are immediately used for improvements or for paying off debts. Moreover, the cost of tractors, jeeps, and fertiliser is very high since they are imported products. Because of the dollar exchange rate their cost is extravagantly high in Brazil, compared with the United States. In addition, the plantation is still burdened with the old equipment and the necessity of pasture for the oxen, which cuts down the acreage available for planting. [492] Animal traction cannot yet be entirely dispensed with, because of the condition of the soil in winter. *249 178 The problem of maintaining the old system of work as well as introducing the new, which can only slowly pay for itself, is considerable. Dona Sinhá is faced with the dilemma of difficult natural conditions which, while good in many ways for sugar cane, impede the application of modern techniques. *249 178 466 She is also faced with personnel problems in relation to the overseer. One solution is clearly apparent and has been adopted by Dona Sinhá: to spend more and more time on the plantation, sharing more and more work with Seu Paulo. This of course is a complete break with the past traditions of the plantation master. It is a difficult break for both parties concerned. Dona Sinhá misses her city

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249* 178 466

life, and Seu Paulo resents the continued presence of the owner and the consequent lessening of his authority.

Along with their feeling of pride and love for the Recôncavo, many landowners recognize clearly the difficulties with which they are faced. The following excerpt from the diary of Dona Sinhá, which I was allowed to read, illustrates the outlook of a sugar-cane planter of the Recôncavo:

[757]

> . . . "Dona Sinhá, there is a man here looking for you." "What is it, my son?" "I have some boils coming out all over my body." Some sulfa and a little ointment do the trick, and just in time, for here comes Seu Paulo, the overseer.
>
> "The oxen of Pedras, the neighboring plantation, invaded the cane fields last night. Also those of Seu Cosme." "I'll telephone the *usina* immediately." "Also, there are no wagons at the loading point." "I'll find out about that too."
>
> The tractor driver comes, complaining that there is no oil. I get that from the storeroom. Now there are two men on the veranda wanting to know about the last payday, when they claim their money "came out wrong." Going through the pay sheets, that was straightened out.
>
> 249* 829 178
>
> Now, while there is no one else, I'll go out and look over the fields. I look at the plantings, feel the earth which I love. But it doesn't satisfy me. Something is missing. We are backward and retrogressing, passively. This place puts an inertia in the heart of a person, a desire to stop fighting, to find everything fine and as it should be--the ragamuffin Negroes, poorly fed, ignorant and rude, their dirty children with protruding stomachs and the white pretending that there is progress, his house full of company, electricity, radio, telephone, horseback rides, poetry of Baudelaire, Verlaine, philosophy of Voltaire, Carlyle, etc.--but in the end, zero! Sometimes I feel a tremendous anguish, I feel that nothing can be done in the Recôncavo and I want to leave this paralyzed land, poisoned with tradition, with its ruined *sobrados*. And we today hold fast to these fantasies and want to relive the opulent past. Deep down there is a clash against these indefatigable overseers, mulattoes, and Negroes with their boots, *senhores da fazenda*.

*249 829 178 [434]

*249 829

The entire harvest is done with great sacrifice, my head wearied by accounts; 6,000 tons of cane, over Cr$600.000,00--a lot of money, enough for all the expenses, and still some left over. What a mistake! The general costs, the extraordinary costs, house repairs, etc., will take it all. So we start again--new plantings, larger fields, all for more money. But we lack the courage to stop planting sugar cane and plant corn or coffee, anything else. We were born hearing of senhores de engenho, of trays and trays of silver service, of Negro slaves, of everything which has disappeared into the past. But it still burns in our blood, and deep down we want to have lands, to order and be obeyed. We like the humble and servile vassalage of the Negro, which makes us feel important, the dispensers of favors.

I think of this as old Saturno goes along, step by step. There is Paulos Santos coming along the road, with his little burro and two baskets, going to get manioc for the ever-present farinha. "Good morning, Patron!" What affection I feel for each one of them! Pedro Manuel with so many little children; Zé Julião with his sick wife, Conceição with his air of secular servility. But affection resolves nothing! Money and action do! I could knock down those miserable hovels and make good hygienic houses.

Once home I fall into the hammock, reading Proust and forgetting everything.

The Usina: Usina São Pedro

*249 473

*249 433 [128] [656]

The Sociedad Anonima, the corporation which operates this factory, represents the new pattern in the Recôncavo. There are now nine factories functioning in the Recôncavo, for the trend has been to close the small ones which could not function economically. Five of the nine belong to one corporation, which holds extensive lands and receives the cane of many suppliers. We will describe the smallest of the four independent factories, which has a rated capacity of seventy-two thousand sacks of sugar as compared with the two hundred thousand of one of the larger mills (a sack equaling 60 kilograms). The legal capacity of the Usina São Pedro--which it has never reached--is fifty-two thousand sacks, as determined by the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol. At the present time, however,

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[The Usina]

the factory is undergoing a reformation which will raise its 249*
capacity to over one hundred thousand sacks, and the legal 433
capacity will be readjusted.

Usina São Pedro, although the smallest, is representative 249*
of the others and experiences the same problems and difficulties. 473
It differs from some in that it is a family enterprise.
The stockholders are nearly all members of the Conde family, [653]
and the operations are directed by two members of the
family. The factory itself was one of the three built by the [423]
state government in 1900 on land controlled by the Navy,[5] on
the edge of the Bay, which provides excellent year-round
transportation facilities. The mill was acquired in 1909 by the
Conde family with two plantations, to which the family has
since added four other contiguous plantations. The corporation
has a total area of slightly over four thousand acres, mostly
of rich *massapê* soil. The factory receives cane from the plantation 249*
of Dona Sinhá, who is also a member of the Conde family [602]
by birth and by marriage. It also gets cane from four other
plantations within the community and four outside the community,
which send their cane by the traditional sailboat. In addition, [423]
the factory owns a 2,324-acre plantation in the county [505]
of Purificação which is used for grazing and raising cattle
and for supplying wood for the factory fires. There is direct
water transportation between the factory and the plantation in
Purificação.

The designation *usina* has several meanings which are quite 249*
similar to the meanings of the older term, *engenho*. In its 192
larger context, *usina* means the entire land-factory combination,
including the mill and all the plantations belonging to the
corporation. More specifically, *usina* means the factory building
itself. In another context, *usina* simply indicates the population
nucleus, including the factory, the owner's house, and
the other buildings.

The *usina* or factory nucleus roughly follows the same settlement 249*
pattern of the old plantations. The point of orientation 361
is the factory building, near which stand the chalet and
other homes of the owning family, which are grouped together [178]
in a park of royal palms and mango trees. Usually a small
chapel or oratory is included in one wing of the chalet, where

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[5] The shoreline bordering salt water is controlled to the depth of 33 meters by the Brazilian Navy. [311]

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[The Usina]

*
249 361 a Mass can be celebrated for the family when a priest is available.

Situated nearest the chalet are the houses of the general overseer, the chief mechanic of the factory, the major office employees, and the director of the factory store. Next in order are the houses of the technical personnel of the factory. Behind them and farthest from the center are the homes of the agricultural workers who work on the plantation nearest the factory nucleus. The regional overseer of this plantation also lives among his plantation workers. The school and the store are located just outside the small park of the chalet.

[342] [177] The chalet has replaced the former solar (mansion) of the plantation masters. Its style differs from the earlier type and its name is derived from the fact that it is a modified copy of a Swiss chalet. In a different way it is as ornate as the old solar, but more up-to-date, with running water and electricity.

*
249 466 The personal, paternal aspect of the private plantation obviously cannot function on the usina, which has 1,350 people living on its lands. There is, nevertheless, an attempt at just such relations. The owning family spends vacations in the chalet. They also spend Christmas, Carnaval, and Botada[6] there, and at those times there are parties for the workers, Christmas presents for them and for their wives and children, dances, and ball games. The Coronel (Colonel, an honorary title now going out of use), the patriarch of the family, now incapacitated, still receives visits from the older workmen who used to have daily contact with him. His son and son-in-law, present directors of the enterprise, make their presence felt throughout the factory and the six plantations as best they can. As on the private plantation, the final arbitration of any difficulty lies with the usineiro, and no worker considers himself too far removed to go to him if he cannot get satisfaction from his overseer. However, the strongest relationships, both business and personal, lie between overseer and worker--employee and employee--rather than between employee and employer.

The private plantation presents a far better appearance than

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[788] [6] Botada is the annual blessing of the factory machinery, performed on the first day of the grinding season. It is a traditional ceremony formerly carried out on the plantations.

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[The Usina]

The private plantation presents a far better appearance than 249*
any plantation belonging to the factory, for it is usually "home" 466
to the owner, who is interested in keeping it as pleasant as 184
possible, while the factory plantation in charge of an overseer
is simply a business project existing only to produce sugar
cane.

At the Usina São Pedro, as stated earlier for the Recôncavo 249*
generally, the consolidation of land by the corporations has 423
not turned the entire property into one large plantation. In-
stead, each plantation has retained its old boundaries, indeed
complete autonomy, following only the general policies of the
factory directory. The Usina São Pedro happens to be situat-
ed in a central position in relation to its six plantations. This
is not always the case, for frequently the lands of a factory
are scattered far from the plant itself, creating difficulties
of administration and transportation.

Each of the plantations has its own nucleus, the street of 249*
workers' houses oriented toward the house of the overseer. 36
Each of these little villages has its own small store, usually a
private enterprise of the overseer. The largest plantation, Pe-
dras, has a chapel and a school. None of the plantations has an [206]
electric power line, but each has a telephone in the overseer's 249*
house. The feeling of isolation and abandonment is strong, as
indeed it is on almost all overseer-directed plantations belong- 571
ing to a factory. There is a general feeling of pity for the res-
idents who are situated so far from their patrão and whose
first recourse must be the overseer, a man like themselves,
with little or no education and little interest in the people oth-
er than to keep them working. In other words, the factory [184]
plantation lacks the paternal hand of the owner. In other re-
spects it is similar to the private plantation in that it has an
overseer, a foreman, a cowboy, and resident workmen.

The bulk of the agricultural direction of the São Pedro plan- 249*
tations is in the hands of the general overseer, Seu Pipiu. It 463
is his duty to direct and supervise the activities of all six 466
plantations. He is a man of no small status. He is practical-
ly independent in his actions, for the directors of the factory
tell him how much cane they feel they need in the forthcoming
harvest, and it is up to him to produce it. The methods and
problems in doing this are left up to him. Seu Pipiu gives or-
ders to each of the regional overseers, whose duties are the
same as those of the overseer on a private plantation. The
only difference is that they are dealing with a superior em-
ployee, instead of with the owner in person. The general over-

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[The Usina]

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249
463 seer is entitled to the same rights and privileges as any oth-
er worker: a house, land on which to grow subsistence crops,
466 and the use of the owner's pastures for his oxen, burros, and
horses. The horses used in his work are supplied by the cor-
[492] poration, as are those of the other overseers. His salary is
high: Cr$2.000,00 a month, plus a bonus of one *cruzeiro* for
[465] each ton of cane produced on all six plantations. The regional
overseers receive Cr$800,00 a month, plus a bonus of half a
*249 *cruzeiro* per ton of cane produced on their plantation. Seu
463 Pipiu has been general overseer of Usina São Pedro for twen-
159 ty-five years, during which time he has accumulated a good
deal of property. He is a mulatto, somewhat lighter skinned
than the six administrators who are under him. Two of his
(427) sons work in the factory office, and a third runs the store on
one of the plantations. In addition he is a small farmer, rent-
ing some forty acres from the factory, on which he plants
sugar cane. He pays 25 per cent of the harvest to the factory
for the use of the land.

*249 The *usineiros* have the same complaints against their gen-
eral overseers that private plantation owners have against
466 theirs. At the same time, after many years of service such
an official becomes indispensable, or is thought to be, and is
allowed to go his way--quiet, well dressed, well mounted,
ruler of all he surveys--while the *usineiro* watches and mut-
ters to himself.

*249 So far the rural properties of the factories have led the pri-
(184) vate plantations in the field of mechanization, as they have
greater funds for purchasing equipment and can get more use
out of each piece. Mechanization, however, is used as yet
only in preparing the soil for planting. The ground is plowed
and replowed, and grooves are made to receive the cane
shoots. Also, planting in unplowed land is still common--
grooves are opened for the seed with the simple plow, and no
soil preparation is done at all. Here mechanization ends, and
[496] all further cultivation, as well as the cutting and harvesting
of the cane, is done by hand. Narrow-gauge railway tracks
[493] reach out from the mill to loading points on the six planta-
tions, where the cane is transferred from the oxcarts to the
[311] railroad wagons to be drawn to the mill. Approximately two
thousand acres are under cultivation; the remaining land is
used as pasture or as garden plots by the workers, in accord-
ance with a rotation system.

000 Financially the two units--factory and plantation--are run

[The Usina]

Financially the two units--factory and plantation--are run
separately. One set of books is kept for the agricultural part, 249*
and one set for the factory. The six plantations combined pro-
duced eighteen thousand tons of cane in 1950, although they 451
had planned on twenty-three thousand. The fall in the expect- 184
ed harvest was due to several things. First, less new cane was 249*
planted, because of the activities of the petroleum workers
who were invading the cane fields of the factory and drilling oil 433
wells. (The first time a field is cut, the percentage of cane is
higher than that obtained by cuts during the next four or five
years. The same amount of land, therefore, will produce
more cane if it is replanted regularly. The factory, however,
deemed it wiser to be content with the older plantings for one
year because of the oil workers' invasion, for newly planted
cane is more subject to damage than an established field.)
Second, during that year there was a serious drought which af-
fected adversely the growth of sugar cane. There is no irriga-
tion in the Recôncavo, and during the drought seasons which [731]
come periodically a partial crop loss nearly always occurs. In
addition one entire taboleiro caught fire and burned to the
ground, causing the loss of many tons of cane.

The agricultural cycle and the work on a plantation may be 249*
divided into two broad epochs, summer and winter. Summer 221
is the busiest season, for it is harvest time and all hands are
occupied, including the migrant workers. The cutters with [461]
their machetes cut an average of three to four tons a day
apiece, which must be quickly loaded and carried to the fac-
tory and milled, for the longer the lapse of time between the
two operations, the greater the loss of sugar content. After
a field has been cut, one of two things occurs. If it is to be
turned into pasture, it is fenced, and the draft animals are
turned loose in it. Otherwise the leaves which were cut from
the top of the plant and left lying on the ground are burned,
and within a short time the roots start sending up new shoots.
This old planting (soca) each year gives a decreased yield. As
a rule a field is cut and burned three to four years before be-
ing turned into pasture. In the days of the old plantations, when
the soil was more vigorous, cane of twelve years was consid-
ered "new cane." Now, however, the yield is so decreased by [134]
the increasing poverty of the soil that three to four years is
the best, depending upon the amount of rain. During the sum-
mer, if land is prepared and there are prospects of heavy
showers, "summer plantings" may be made. They are never
as good as those done in the winter, for the sun frequently

*249 221 kills the new shoots. Toward the end of summer, the pastures or garden plots which are to be made into new plantations (rêgo novo) are prepared, for such work is usually done in accordance with conditions of the land rather than only at the [433] time of planting. New plantings yield an average of thirty to forty tons per acre. Cutting, transporting, burning, and planting are done by the resident workers, while the weeding and general cultivating are carried out by the migrant laborers.

Work in the winter period can usually be handled by the resident workers alone. The planting of cane goes on throughout the year, but the most favorable time is during July and August, when the rains begin to diminish in constancy and the sun shines longer. Cane planted at this time gives the greatest yield. The seed used is the top part of the cane itself, the "eye" which appears just below the leaves. As a rule each plantation furnishes most of its own seed. That for the summer planting comes from the cane which is cut to go to the factory, and that for the winter from small plantings made [654] previously for the purpose. The state government also maintains an agricultural station in the area, from which the planters can get seed. During the winter all repairs are made on houses, fences, and equipment, and of course the necessary drainage ditches must be built or repaired and seasonal cultivation and clearing work must be done.

*249 435 The usineiros maintain that the agricultural operations pay more than does the factory. The factory plantations sell their cane at the same price as the private suppliers, a price fixed by the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol. This price has gradually gone up as have all the factory costs. But the ceiling price of sugar, which is Cr$166,00 a sack, has not increased. In 1951 the cost per sack of sugar at Usina São Pedro was [434] Cr$132,00. Each year the costs rise, creeping nearer and nearer to the selling price. So while the books show that each plantation is making more money for its cane, the factory's books show a slackening of profits. At the moment, most of the factories in the Recôncavo are engaged in refining their processes in order to get a higher percentage of sugar out of [433] each ton of cane. The Usina São Pedro is only able to get an average of eighty kilograms of sugar per ton of cane, while the largest factory gets one hundred kilograms per ton. The factory also loses money because it pays for the cane by the ton of dead weight, and not by the percentage of sucrose the cane contains. As a result the planters are interested in rais-

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[The Usina]

249* 435 ing a heavy cane and increasing their tonnage rather than in raising the quality of the cane. There is a movement under way to change the payment method to payment by percentage of sucrose, but it seems to be gaining little headway.[7]

249* 46 The factory of the Usina São Pedro is directed personally by two members of the Conde family, while most other factories have a paid employee, a general manager, who is the industrial counterpart of the general overseer. There are approximately eighty salaried employees in this factory, who are paid by the day and who work all year long. The factory operates from September till February--the harvest season--in two shifts of twelve hours each. During the harvest season over a hundred migrant workers are added to the payroll under the direction of the contractor, and usually work on the endless belt and in the unloading operations.

249* 466 The resident factory worker, in addition to receiving a house, also has the right to electric light and to firewood. These workers are trained in the factory, and many of them have been there for a long time. The Usina São Pedro is especially proud of the loyalty of its men, many of whom remained there during the war when they were being enticed away with higher wages by the federal government to build military installations. The Usina São Pedro has experienced no labor difficulties as have some other larger factories, which have had riots and demonstrations caused by labor unions. This is due partly to the small size of the factory, and partly to the continued atmosphere of paternalism, to which many other factories are now making a determined effort to return.

Thus paternalism stands out as one of the major factors in the complicated organizational hierarchy of plantation life. The former master is now simply the patron, but in this role he carries out almost the same functions as did the master in relation to the well-being of his slaves. The patron of today has the same ethical responsibilities toward his workmen as did the former master. In general these responsibilities include care of the workmen beyond the mere payment of a salary, such as care of the sick and the old. Paternalism today is found at its highest degree on the private, family-run plantation and at its lowest degree on the overseer-run, corpora-

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[7] Jayme V. B. Machado, _Industria acucareira na Bahia_ (Bahia, 1950).

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249
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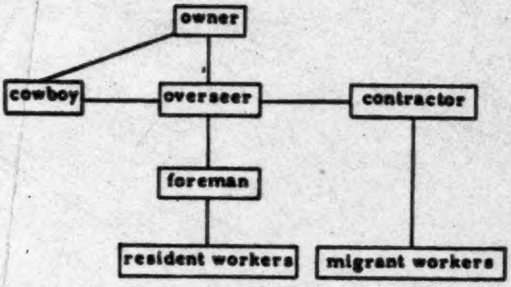
owner
cowboy
overseer
contractor
foreman
resident workers
migrant workers

Fig. 1. Hierarchical diagram of the private plantation (Fazenda das Moças)

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249
473
46
184

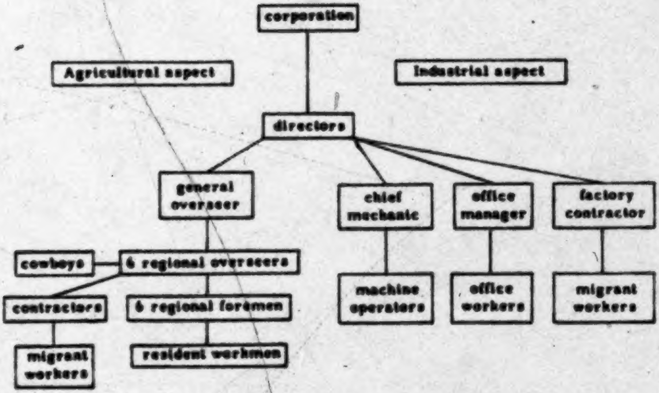
corporation
Agricultural aspect
Industrial aspect
directors
general overseer
chief mechanic
office manager
factory contractor
cowboys
6 regional overseers
contractors
6 regional foremen
migrant workers
resident workmen
machine operators
office workers
migrant workers

Fig. 2. Hierarchical diagram of the *usina* system (Usina São Pedro)

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[The Usina]

249*
tion plantation. At its highest level it is a form of unwritten 466
social security which works well, supplementing the low wages which are paid throughout the area. Even on the factory plantations there is a mild form of paternalism, which is stronger in plantations nearer to the factory and to the home of the usineiro.

The migrant workers, however, do not fit into the pattern 249*
of paternalism, mostly because they do not seek it. Indirectly 464
they receive its benefits, for if one of them is ill he can go 466
to the contractor who will then go to the plantation owner or usineiro for medicine or whatever is needed. But in general the migrant laborers stay by themselves and ask little or nothing of their employers.

In addition to the protection provided by a paternalistic system, 249*
the workers have the right to at least half an acre of land 466
on the plantation where they can plant and raise their subsistence crops. [241]
Often they also plant tobacco, both in these plots and in the small areas throughout the plantation where no sugar cane is planted, such as corners where the plow cannot
penetrate. The tobacco is sold to traveling buyers who scour [443]
the area at the tobacco harvest season. The money thus gained
belongs to the workers, and many of them say that cash earned [434]
in such a way provides the "extras" they like during the year, such as rum, cigarettes, a pair of earrings, or some perfume.

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226

Pulling in
the deep net

504

Waiting for the
arrival of the boat

[P. 72]

5. Town Life

THE OCCUPATIONS of the townspeople in Vila Recôncavo 369
differ considerably from the pursuits of the people in the ru- 463
ral zone. The town residents are engaged in gaining a living
from a number of small enterprises; the economy is a money 632
economy, and not one dominated by mutual obligations and [434]
rights, as it is to a certain degree on the plantations. Vila
Recôncavo is the county seat and lacks any organized com- [433]
merce or industry. It can be called an administrative town,
inasmuch as government employment is the life of many of [647]
the people, especially the town's upper class.

The economic occupations of the townspeople can be divided 463
into four groups: (1) the bureaucrats and merchants; (2) the group which serves them, such as cooks and laundresses; (3) a middle group of artisans whose greatest asset, as well as liability, is their independence; (4) a small group of people who do not fit into any of the three groups above.

According to the census which was taken in June, 1950, the [162]
labor force of the town numbered 459 persons, including men and women. Of the 459, eleven listed themselves as unemployed. The remainder of the population were listed as housewives, students, small children, and old people who were retired or incapacitated. In this category, which numbers about one thousand people, there are individuals who engage in part-time work, such as carrying water or firewood or doing piece-work sewing--in other words, small occupations which in their eyes are not worthy of being classed as employment.

The occupations which were listed can be broken down into the four groups mentioned above as follows:

[Town Life]

463
[632]
[441]

Group 1 (bureaucrats and merchants)	Federal and state employees	54
	Municipal employees	16
	Merchants	12
		82
Group 2 (service occupations)	Laundresses	46
	Ironers	17
	Electricians	1
	General servants	29
	Seamstresses	8
	Embroiderers	1
	Store cashiers	10
	Canoeists	2
	Bakery workers	4
		118
Group 3 (artisans)	Farmers	24
	Fishermen	132
	Bricklayers	6
	Barbers	6
	Carpenters	4
	Tailors	3
	Peddlers	3
	Woodworkers	2
	Coopers	1
	Butchers	1
	Shoemakers	1
	Quitandeiras[1]	1
		184

Group 3 workers employ the following number of people, either as employees or as apprentices:

Bricklayers	17
Workers in roças	13
Fishermen	5
Tailors	4
Woodworkers	1
Carpenters	1

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(443)

[1] Quitanda is an incipient store, usually run by a woman who sells vegetables and fruit from her windowsill.

[Town Life]

463

	Barbers	2
	Apprentice bricklayers	1
		44
Group 4 (miscellaneous)	Unemployed	11
	Factory workers	9
	Plantation workers	3
	Employees of Institute Vila Recôncavo (which will be described later)	8
		31

The federal and state employees in the town consist of the following people: 463 632

- 25 petroleum workers
- 9 teachers and maintenance workers from the nearby federal school
- 6 primary school teachers
- 3 tax collectors and secretary
- 1 federal statistics agent
- 1 postal and telegraph agent
- 1 mail carrier
- 2 secretaries of the Justice of the Peace
- 1 secretary of the civil register
- 1 police secretary
- 1 police lieutenant
- 2 policemen (this number changes occasionally)
- 1 malaria serviceman (called "José do DDT")

The Justice of the Peace, who is not listed above, does not live in the county but holds court in the courthouse once a week, or at other times if the occasion demands. His secretary, a local woman, does most of the work and has everything in readiness when he arrives. [693]

The twenty-five men listed as petroleum workers represent that industry's major contribution to the town. The oil workers receive relatively good wages, steady and sufficient for them to engage the services of at least one servant and a laundress. They may therefore be included in Group 1, even though they are not white-collar workers as are the others of the group. These men, rather than living in the petroleum workers' camp which is near the factory, have brought their fam- 463 [484]

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463 [484] [521] lies to live in Vila Recôncavo and travel to their work and back daily. During the summer this trip is made by truck, but in the winter it is made by foot or if possible by canoe. The petroleum industry has attracted few local people as yet. Instead, strangers have come into the area as petroleum employees. A favorite conversation among fishermen is a discussion of whether they should give up fishing and go to work in the oil fields. The general feeling is that they are better off as fishermen. As they put it, if they fished for the same number of hours as the oil men work, they could earn more money than the petroleum workers. In their present occupation they can work as much or as little as they wish, the major determinant being whether there is enough in the house to eat and still a little left over for cigarettes, Coca-Colas, and occasional new clothes. They are an independent group, and are frequently criticized as being lazy because they will not take steady employment. This seems an unfair criticism in view of the rigors of fishing.

463 [875] [632] The others listed in the group of federal and state employees have permanent appointments to their jobs and in all but a few cases are local people. The federal tax collector and his wife, who is one of the schoolteachers, are strangers to the area, but are now well integrated in the town. Three other schoolteachers are from other parts of the state and spend only the school year in Vila Recôncavo. There is a difference between the teachers who make Vila Recôncavo their home and those who do not. Those who spend only the school year there have little or no contact with the local population, apparently feeling that they are superior to anyone there. They are young women, but do not look for husbands among local men and openly admit they do not like the town. They are prominent in the group which calls the fishermen lazy and uncultured, and in general are unsympathetic to the town dwellers.

463 632 There are sixteen municipal employees, all of them local people, consisting of the county secretary, the treasurer and his assistant, the contador who takes care of the county spending, the fiscal who is supposed to supervise the collecting of the county funds, three county tax collectors, and others who occupy minor posts such as courthouse porter. These positions are appointive, and as a result of the relative stability of the area's politics the appointees are seldom changed. The secretary is the man who does most of the county's adminis-

463 632 [443] [471]

trative work; he comes into office with a mayor and frequently remains through the terms of several other mayors. He therefore knows the duties well and can aid the mayor considerably. In addition, the secretary has a small store in town, capitalized at Cr$10.000,00, where drinks (rum and soft drinks), dried meat (charque), cigars, cigarettes, grass mats, condensed milk, wooden sandals, and a few other small items are sold.

The top municipal office is that of the mayor, which in Brazil is a county-wide office. The mayor is not on the above list as an employee, because he occupies another place in the census from which these data were taken. In Vila Recôncavo the mayor has come traditionally from the top social level, the rural landowning group. The office is elective, with a four-year term, except in the 1930's and 1940's, when the mayor was chosen by the appointed governor of the state (interventor). In Vila Recôncavo, as a general rule, the mayor has little or no interest in the town or, except in a few cases, in the office, which is considered a more-or-less onerous duty. He traditionally does not accept his salary. At the time of the last election there was consternation on the part of the planters, for no one wanted the office but clearly someone had to take it. When the choice was made, the candidate--one of the usina directors--was elected, for he had no opponent. The majority of the duties are left in the hands of the secretary, the mayor doing only a minimum of supervision and contributing little that is constructive. Generally any important matters are discussed at the home of the mayor, and his orders are conveyed to the secretary by messenger or telephone.

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The last mayor, Dr. Aliança, was an exception to the rule. He was interventor in 1947 and was elected mayor in 1948, serving until the general elections in the fall of 1950. He is a civil engineer and the owner of two large plantations, maintaining in perfect condition the old master's house of the former plantation in which he lives, as well as a large house in Salvador. While the roots of his family are in the Recôncavo, he himself came from the north and married into a plantation family of Vila Recôncavo. Although his family tradition has been that of sugar cane, he has not hesitated to break many of the traditional patterns of the area. One of his two plantations has been given over to experiments with other crops, such as bananas, rice, and manioc, on a relatively large scale, and also some production of milk and butter. A few

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632 years ago, after determining that these crops were not suf-
463 ficiently rewarding, he made a large-scale planting of white
[242] cacao. It is still too early to speak of the outcome of this venture, for the trees have not yet started to give their first fruit, but this instance illustrates his usual energetic spirit.

Dr. Aliança took the office of mayor seriously and gave a
159 great deal of energy to it. His accomplishments were many
in the space of a few years: the paving of most of the town's
632 streets, the installation of electric lights on the streets, the
463 formation of a company to sell electricity to those who wanted
it, the installation of telephone communications with the cap-
653 ital, and the construction of a new, modern primary school building. As a result of his personal energy and direction these works were completed, or at least nearly so, when he left the office. (According to law, the mayor cannot be reelected). However, with the exception of building a bridge, nothing was done in the rural areas of the county. Traditionally any public works in the county are done in the county seat.

441 Many of the merchants in Group 1 are small operators.
The capitalization of the stores in Vila Recôncavo runs from
463 Cr$100.000,00 to as low as Cr$5.00,00. However, no matter
443 how small the store, it provides a living for someone, or as
they say in Vila Recôncavo, "Sempre da!" To the ordinary
[471] town citizen it is difficult to get enough capital together to open a store, but once opened it rarely closes for lack of business. Of the twelve stores in town, eight are owned and operated by men, and the other four belong to women. The best store in
441 town and the poorest one both belong to women. The "best"
store, Dona Carmen's, is the oldest, located on the main
444 street leading from the boat dock. At present it is owned by
[428] Dona Carmen, who inherited it from her brother. It combines a general store and a bakery, and its prices are often slightly higher than those in other stores. It serves most of the people living in the older section of town. In addition to having the largest stock of ordinary foods, the store also carries finer packaged products such as wines, jellies, and preserves.

444 Bread is baked in the afternoon and delivered to the doors
of the customers' houses, still warm and with the delicious
256 odor always associated with bread fresh from the oven. The bakery's customers for the most part have standing orders, receiving bread or rolls each day in time for supper. What is left over is hawked through the streets by the delivery boy,

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who walks about with a huge round basket on his head crying, 444 256
"*Pão, pão.*"

Dona Carmen's husband, Damião, is also a storekeeper. 441
His store is in the downhill part of town, near the fishermen.
The two stores are run separately, and the couple are doing 463
well financially. In addition to his store, Damião also owns [444]
several canoes and fish nets which he rents to fishermen. He
is the only storekeeper in town who gives credit to people who [427]
cannot pay immediately, allowing bills to run many months
and even more than a year. He also allows his customers to [452]
borrow money in order to buy things outside his store--for [426]
instance fish, which he does not handle. He does not charge
interest on these loans, nor seemingly make any demands on
those who borrow. On the other hand the borrowers feel a sort
of loyalty toward him and do not forget their debts, which they
eventually manage to pay.

Three of the smallest stores are owned and operated by 441
women, whose husbands have set them up in business in a 444
small way in order, as one put it, to "give my wife something
to do." It is considered desirable for a woman to operate a 463
store and it is usually the beginning of something larger, for [562]
later, whenever possible, the husband will stop his own work
and help operate the store. In the case of the smaller stores
the owner generally lives in the same building, either alongside
the store or behind it. The larger storekeepers, however,
usually have separate houses. At night they lock up the stores, [431]
which are sometimes guarded by dogs or even by the cashiers
who sleep there. The storekeepers are usually asked for do- [66]
nations to the church at the time of any special festivals, and
generally become politically active after they become established in business.

The stock in most of the stores is pretty much the same, 443
varying in amount rather than diversity: drinks (rum and soft drinks), dried meat (the staple meat of the population), cereals, cigars, cigarettes, *estivas* (which include beans, rice, and farina, the three great staples of the local diet), as well as coffee, palm oil (*azeite de dendê*), vinegar, olive oil, garlic, onions, wooden sandals, condensed and powdered milk, salt, sugar, *miudezas* (small items such as matches and ribbons), toilet articles and laundry soaps, blueing agents and starch, grass mats, kerosene, and in one store aluminum kitchenware which is not sold very often, as well as nails, wire, screws, and wrapping paper and cord. One store in the

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443 upper part of town also sells cloth. Most stores also have
small supplies of chocolate (considered a great treat at a party),
tea, honey, canned desserts such as guava, and canned
butter and cheese. As a rule fresh vegetables are not sold in
the stores but peddled through the streets, since few people
eat them. It is more practical to order them specially from
someone going to the fair in Centro. Nearly everyone has a
banana tree or an orange tree in the back yard, so that few
fruits are sold in the stores. The other seasonal crops, such
as cashew nuts, corn, and pineapples, are peddled from house
443 to house. As a rule people in Vila Recôncavo buy their food
432 in small quantities, since they have no methods of food preservation.
[251] A liter bottle is carried to the store to be filled with
oil or kerosene; a small can is carried there to be filled with
rice, beans, or farina. The smoked meat called charque is
bought by the kilo and left hanging in the kitchen, and strips
are cut from it at meal times. Although the price of charque
is as high as that of fresh meat, and at times higher, people
say it is more satisfying. As a rule the butcher in Vila Recôncavo
kills two steers a week, on Wednesday and Saturday. The
meat is carried through the streets unwrapped, hanging from
a cord. It is not unusual to see a string of dogs following such
a person. The meat is eaten the same day to prevent spoilage,
and as a result it is usually tough and flavorless.

463 Most of the people included in Group 1 lead an upper-class
*565 kind of life; indeed to a great extent these people are the town's
highest class, as will be shown in the next chapter. These are
the people who do little or no labor themselves other than the
white-collar work with which they earn their living. The men
[291] dress in city clothes most of the time--white shirt, tie, and
suit coat--and the women are always neatly dressed with shoes
and silk stockings. (The oil workers are an exception, for they
do not hold white-collar jobs but wear overalls and helmets).
There is always help to do the housework and the marketing.
463 Sometimes a cook is employed; otherwise the lady of the house
*565 does her own cooking, assisted by her daughters. The laundry
is sent out, or else the laundress comes to the house to do it,
357 and water for drinking purposes and for washing is brought to
[296] the house by a man or woman employed for the purpose; members
of the household never fetch water at the wells. Often
[312] the house has a cement tank and drains on the roof to catch
rainwater. Nor does any member of the house fetch firewood,
[313] which is supplied by a hired person.

[Town Life]

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The majority of people in Group 1 live in the older part of
Vila Recôncavo, often in the old colonial *sobrados*, and they [361]
rarely descend the hill to the part of town inhabited by the
fishermen. Indeed, they mix little with people of the town,
and there is almost no social life within the group itself. Parties [574]
are expensive, and visiting from house to house in the
evening is not common. Vila Recôncavo has no such pastime
as the evening walk in the square. This group is seldom united
on anything, especially local politics; however, the more distant
the question the more apt the group is to be of one mind.

Most families in this group send their children to school in [871]
Salvador, go there on holidays whenever possible, receive the
city newspaper and the *Diario Oficial*,[2] and shop in the city [204]
as often as they can. [443]

Vila Recôncavo differs in one respect from most other rural
Brazilian communities: it has no parish priest. The moth- 793
er church of the parish (*matriz*) has long been unable to sup-
port its own priest, and the duties which would normally fall [792]
to such a person are performed by the Franciscans, whose
convent is in Vila Recôncavo. The priests remain within the
convent, taking little or no part in the social life of the town.

It will be noted that there was no mention of a drug store in 743
Vila Recôncavo. There was none until 1945, when a nonprofit
organization, the Institute of Vila Recôncavo, was opened. [444]
This is a medical post supported by federal, state, municipal,
and private funds; its director is Friar Innocence, a Franciscan [792]
lay brother. The institute is housed in the spacious
old buildings of the extinct Third Order of Franciscans, and
consists of a pharmacy, an infants' milk and soup distributing
center, a maternity post, a dental post, and other medical
facilities. The dentist, who has modern equipment, is competent 743
in his work. For several years a doctor was in daily 759
attendance, dividing his time between the institute and the
petroleum workers' camp. As a result of a complicated local
political conflict, he left the institute, however, and Friar
Innocence arranged for a visiting doctor to come from Centro
and spend two days a week in Vila Recôncavo. Three town
girls were sent to Salvador to study nursing and midwifery,
so there is competent medical assistance.

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[2] The *Diario Oficial* is the newspaper in which government laws and regulations are published. As a rule, it is the publication of a regulation which makes it become a law.

743 so there is competent medical assistance. Those who are too poor to pay receive free aid and medications, milk, and soup; those who can pay do so, paying only the wholesale prices of the articles. The institute is well equipped, with an x-ray machine, diathermy, and other heat appliances, which are popular because of the prevalence of colds and rheumatism.

743 The institute also operates the weekly motion picture which
529 has been a great boon to the town, a recreation room, centrally located in the town, which has a radio, billiard tables, and
[546] a bar selling milk shakes, sandwiches, beer, and soft drinks.
743 This place has become the major meeting place for the men and boys of the town. In addition to this, the institute also
873 runs a night school for adults.

463 Group 2, as listed at the beginning of this chapter, consists mainly of the people who work for those in Group 1 and
[571] who are attached to them by the bonds of the patronship to some extent, as well as by salary. The majority of persons
[462] in this category are women, engaged in the traditional female pursuits of washing, ironing, sewing, embroidering, and general housework.

296 As a rule the laundry is washed at one of the town wells, which are encased in cement. The women carry the dirty
462 clothes, a bucket, and wooden basin, all piled on top of their
463 heads, to the well. They pull up enough water in their buck-
[482] ets to fill the basins in which the clothes are washed. After a soaking and scrubbing with soap the wet, soapy clothes are spread out on the ground in the sun, and from time to time water is sprinkled on them to aid the sun in bleaching. Then the clothes are rewashed and spread out to dry. Depending upon the weather, the washing and drying process may take from a whole day to three or four days before the clothes are considered clean enough. Then they are taken home to be
[463] ironed. The older pattern demanded that a different person do the ironing, but today this pattern is breaking down and fre-
[178] quently the same person washes and irons. The irons used are the old-fashioned kind heated by charcoal, which is placed inside and ignited. The irons are made with drafts to keep the fire going, and the women must stop frequently to fan the fire or renew the charcoal. Often a busy woman has two irons going and sets one aside to heat while she irons with the other.

462 Many women also prepare *xangô*, a small sardinelike fish
252 caught in great quantities by the fishermen of Vila Recônca-
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vo. There are about twenty women in the town who are thus 252
employed constantly, and others who work part-time with the 463
fish. They go down to the beach, carrying five-gallon gasoline
cans, when they see the fishermen coming in, and buy the 463
fish by the canful at about Cr$25, 00 a can, sometimes buying 462
as many as ten canfuls. An exceptional catch for a day will 252
run well over fifty cans, especially during the winter months. 43
The women then take the fish home, clean them and pack them
in salt for twenty-four hours, after which they put them on
spits, two narrow slivers of wood cut from the dendê palm.
Five fish go on each two spits. They are then hung out to dry [251]
in the sun for about two days. If it rains, the drying takes
longer, and frequently many are lost. Few of the women ever
become accustomed to the odor of the salted, drying fish, and
they complain bitterly about it. But they know that there is
always a market for the dried product, and this compensates
to some extent for the unpleasantness involved. A can of
fish usually provides 150 to 200 spits, and they are sold for
Cr$25, 00 to Cr$30, 00 a hundred spits. The price is generally [443]
slightly higher if they are sold at the weekly Monday market
in Centro, to which the women as a rule go themselves, or to
which they send the fish with a friend. Otherwise, they are
sold to the occasional tropeiros de cima[3] who come to town
to buy them at a slightly lower price. It is said that the small
dried fish are considered a fine dish by the people of the sertão.

Other women prepare shrimp in much the same manner, al- 463
though the prices are higher. A can of shrimp costs between 462
Cr$100, 00 and Cr$150, 00 depending upon the size of the catch
and the season of the year, for during Lent and especially 435
during Holy Week, when the demand is greater, all prices of [252]
fish and seafood rise. A can of shrimp gives two hands (duas
mãos), or forty spits, of shrimp, which are sold at the av-
erage of Cr$100, 00 a hand; the price of the finished product 462
varies with the price of the fresh shrimp. However, a man in 463
Vila Recôncavo recently built an icehouse, and the women have 438
worked less with shrimp, for the fishermen sell directly to 251

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[3] Tropeiros de cima (troopers from up north) are men from the sertão who descend to the Recôncavo with mules loaded with farina to sell, and return north with fish and fruit from the Recôncavo.

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462 the icehouse where the shrimp are kept cool; they can then be
438 sent to Salvador every other day on the boat to be sold as fresh
251 shrimp at the market and on the streets. "Camarão da Vila,"
[443] (shrimp from Vila) the cry of the Salvador street peddlers,
is well known throughout the capital city.

463 The majority of people in Group 2 live down the hill from
the older part of town, near the beach or out along the road
[361] which leads to the factory. They are more or less dependent
upon Group 1, not only for the money they receive in return
[571] for services, but also for many kinds of favors which fall un-
[476] der the heading of patronship. They are seldom able to em-
ploy the services of Group 3 for such jobs as house building
or repairing; they must rely on an old form of cooperative
labor, called the batalhão (work group), to make or repair a
house wall or to put on a new thatch roof. Frequently a patron
will arrange for another of his "dependents" to transport the
mud necessary for the palm thatch (taipa), and there is no cost
involved for the recipient; but she must arrange the labor.

463 The people of Group 2 fetch their own water from the wells,
312 and usually their own firewood from the tideswamps. There
[313] are several men and women in town who make a business of
carrying these two commodities. Such work is contractual.
A household contracts for so many cans or barrels of water
a day and so many loads of firewood a week. If they do not
have enough money for these services they must carry them
out themselves. During the dry summer months fetching wa-
ter is a tedious business, for the majority of the wells dry
up early in the summer. In the very dry summer of 1950-51,
all the wells in town but one went dry. The one which contin-
ued to supply water did so at a much diminished rate. This
well is completely encased in cement, for it provides the on-
ly drinking water in town. There is a small pipe serving as
a spigot. During the dry season it takes from ten to twenty
minutes to fill a five-gallon tin can from this pipe. As a re-
sult, there were always long lines of women waiting for wa-
ter, and a sojourn of three or four hours at the well was com-
mon. Many of the more ambitious women used to get up at two
or three in the morning and go to the well, making several
[821] trips so they would be free of this onerous duty during the day.
This, however, took a great deal of courage, for most people
[492] in Vila Recôncavo are afraid of the dark, and no timid woman
would make the trip out to the well at night. By general agree-
ment, the men who carry water in barrels on donkeys walked

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two miles west of the town to another well which did not have 312
to serve so many people. Many women also made this trip, [492]
with five-gallon cans of water on their heads, and with their [482]
children carrying smaller cans.

In the past many women of this group possessed heirlooms: 463
jewelry handed down to them by their female ancestors who
had been favorite slaves of their white masters and who had 523
received valuable brooches, necklaces, rings, and earrings 422
from them, in accordance with the old pattern of luxury which extended even to certain slaves. In most cases this jewelry has now been sold at some time of emergency to antique dealers who scour the rural areas looking for such treasures, which are now highly valuable and sought by collectors.

Group 3 is made up of independent artisans, that is, people 463
who are self-employed. It differs from Group 1 in that its members rarely employ the services of other people in personal or household activities, although gardeners, carpenters, tailors, fishermen, bricklayers, and barbers do employ people in their business. The large number of men employed by the bricklayers should be explained, as it is not a permanent category. The census from which these data were taken was made in June, 1950, at the height of the work of paving the town streets with cobblestones. A number of bricklayers had come to town for this work, and they as well as the resident bricklayers had to employ workmen to do the work with them for the municipal government. When the paving was finished there was no longer a need for so many bricklayers, and they either left or went into fishing or some other occupation. Since the data were collected, the tailors have also moved to another town as a result of the lack of business in Vila Recôncavo.

The majority of men in this group are the fishermen, who 463
number 132, plus 5 who are employed rather than self-em- 226
ployed. They fish from canoes, with several types of nets,
for a large variety of fish. The federal statistics agent lists 43
seventeen types of fish, including shrimp, giving the following weight and price for the year's activities: 129,070 kilograms and Cr$921.540,00 (slightly under $50,000.00). Shrimp earns slightly more than half this total, Cr$468.000,00, although the amount in kilograms is only 26,000. *Xangó*, already mentioned, is the second most profitable product, bringing in Cr$195.000,00 for 65,000 kilograms. The statistics agent admits that these figures are approximations

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226 43 based on what the fishermen claim to have caught, for the fish is not weighed and the price is based on a low average price per kilogram for all types of fish. As a rule fish is sold by the can and not by weight. The one man in town who buys fish for his icehouse usually buys "by the eye," that is, by estimation of how many kilograms he is getting. If anything, however, the above figures err by underestimation.

463 226 227 The life of the fisherman is a rugged one, and his schedule follows the incoming and outgoing tides. There are six types of nets most commonly used: the circular casting net (*tarrafa*) and the deep net (*rêde de fundo*) or drag net (*rêde de arrasto*) to catch shrimp; the *ressc* and *abaladeira*, the former for *xangó* and the latter for sardines and *tainha* (a small sardine-like fish); and the *calão* and *calãozinho* for the larger fish. These are the most popular nets, but there also exist several others used with less frequency, such as the *arraieira*, a net used only to catch the *arraia*, or skate fish; the *pesqueiro*, a pole-and-net trap to catch all kinds of large fish; the *caçoeira*, to catch the *caçao* and other very large fish; and the *jereré*, a small basketlike net used by women and children along the shore to catch small fish and crabs. In addition, a long line with many hooks on it (*grosseira*), baited to catch large fish,
226 is used. The hook and line is very seldom used. Fish poison is employed. *Tingui*, a toxic plant, is mashed and scattered on the water in the *mangue* at low tide, and it stupefies the *caramurú* and *mirorό*, two inhabitants of the *mangue*.

The favorite shrimp banks are directly in front of the town of Vila Recôncavo, at the mouth of the river which empties into the Bay of All Saints. The preferred time to use the circular casting net for shrimp is early on a windless morning, during the hours of full tide when the incoming surge has ended and the outgoing current has not yet started. The shrimp fleet seen from the heights of the town presents a scene of utmost tranquility, for there is little action involved other than the quick throwing out and the slow pulling in and folding of the net. *Tarrafa* fishing is a one-man job. The man paddles a canoe out to the area where the shrimp are usually to be found, which in this case is a large submerged rock on the edge of the river channel, around which shrimp are numerous. Arriving there the fisherman ships his paddle and begins to cast his net, standing in the stern of the canoe. As a rule there are between twenty and thirty fishermen casting in and about the same place. The net is cone-shaped, the apex being

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attached to the canoe by a cord called the *espia* (literally, "it spies"), 226 with which the fisherman can feel when the net has reached the bottom; he can also feel any activity within the net indicating that he has caught something. The net is about 18 feet high, and its round bottom has a circumference of approximately 120 feet. A series of lead weights are sewn into the bottom to carry it downward through the water. The whole net, with its lead, weighs between 5 and 6 kilograms. The sizes of nets vary with their age, for constant repair enlarges them or sometimes makes them smaller. While the man is fishing, the canoe remains drifting, undirected. As the tide begins to run out the fisherman must stop casting his net every so often to paddle the canoe back to the starting point and to keep it from being carried away from the fishing grounds. At other times, if the shrimp appear to be moving away, he [461] picks up his paddle and follows them. The entire operation of casting the net, pulling it in, and emptying it into the bottom of the canoe takes from ten to twenty minutes. If the shrimp are present in great numbers the fisherman speeds up his activities; if not he moves more slowly. C. F. Ott calls the cir- [177] cular casting net "incontestably a Portuguese cultural element."[4]

The period of fishing rarely lasts more than three hours, for by then the tide is moving more strongly and a breeze has arisen. These two factors upset the fishing for they move the canoes away from the fishing grounds. During the month there are approximately fifteen days of fishing with the casting net. If his luck is good a man may catch 20 to 30 kilograms of shrimp a day, and occasionally more; or else he may catch next to nothing. It should be stated that the author never saw [114] a good-sized catch taken with any net, in spite of the great number of times he accompanied the fishermen.

As a rule the fisherman owns his own casting net or bor- [422] rows one. The canoe is usually rented, and the usual price [427] is two *cruzeiros* for the morning's fishing. Shrimp bring from Cr$15,00 to Cr$25,00 a kilogram, so this type of fishing is [435] relatively remunerative and involves little expense. A net

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[4] C. F. Ott, "Os elementos culturais da pescaria baiana," *Boletim do Museu Nacional* (Rio de Janeiro), No. 4 (October, 1944), p. 31.

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1 226

[435] costs about Cr$240,00 to make and lasts as long as ten years with good care.

227 The drag net, or deep net, as it is sometimes called, is a much larger net used to catch shrimp. It is 360 feet long, 168 feet wide, and has 420 feet of rope on one end and 480 [435] feet on the other. The top is equipped with wooden floats, and the bottom with lead weights. Such a net costs about [422] Cr$4.000,00 and is expensive to keep up, for it is easily torn [441] on submerged objects because of its size and weight. There are only six of them in the town; most of them belong to the merchants, who are the only ones who can afford the upkeep.

226 [461] Fishing with this net is very complicated and requires the services of at least ten men and two canoes, one large and one small. The owner seldom goes fishing. Instead, a master (mestre) is in charge of the operation, and the others in the crew are called "boys" (mocos). One of these is the baixador whose work is done standing in the water. His is an unpleasant job, and he runs the constant risk of being bitten by crabs, stung by large jellyfish, and cut by sharp shells on the bottom. The net is used only at the shrimp grounds already described, where the circular casting net is used, in front of the town. This net must also be used when the tide is at a standstill, because the current makes the heavy net unmanageable. The net is carried on the larger canoe which is paddled by six men, while four go in the smaller one. The canoes pause when they arrive at the customary point for launching the net, and almost everyone lights up a cigarette. There is usually some discussion among the fishermen in the various canoes as to who will launch his net first, but as a rule not more than four of the six nets are used on the same day. Since all four must be launched at exactly the same spot, there is an accepted order of first, second, third, and fourth. First yesterday is last today, each moving up one place each day. But if a crew is late in arriving the others will not wait very long, for the time for net work is short. Seldom do the four crews launch their nets more than twice in one morning. The last launching is called the "hard hard" (duradura), indicating the small returns obtained for such hard work. The first net to be launched usually catches the most shrimp.

[435] [465] On a good day it is not unusual for the first crew to take in Cr$1.000,00 to Cr$2.000,00 worth of shrimp, especially if it made two launchings. The method of paying the crew varies, but as a rule the owner takes between 40 and 50 per cent,

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the remainder being divided among the crew, the master and 226
baixador receiving slightly more than the *moços*. Most fishermen 465
dislike fishing with the drag net for several reasons: 226
although the catch is usually large, it must be divided among 461
many men; there really should be thirteen men to handle the
net, which limits the amount each receives, and when only
ten participate, the work is much greater for each although
the increase in pay is slight; also, the operation is a rather
boring process involving long waiting periods. It is becoming
more and more difficult to get a crew together.

The *resse*, used to catch *xangó*, and the *abaladeira*, used 226
to catch other small fish such as sardines and *tainha*, present
a different operation. The *resse* is a net of close weave, 660
feet long and 12 feet wide. Like the deep net, it has wooden
floats on the top and lead weights on the bottom. A small canoe
(18 to 20 feet) is used, and only two men are necessary.
This net can be used with either the incoming or the outgoing
tide, and at any place. The fishermen have certain favorite
sand and shell banks where they like to fish, east of town. They
launch the net when they see the schools of small fish breaking
water. The *resse* is a recent innovation in Vila Recôncavo, [178]
where it was first used with great secrecy to prevent knowledge
of its weave from falling into the hands of too many
people. But now most fishermen in this part of the Bay of All
Saints are acquainted with it, and the entire county lists twenty-five
resse nets.

A second innovation with this net, and one which applies also [178]
to the *abaladeira*, is the cooperative launching of two nets at
once in order to catch more fish. Two canoes participate, [476]
each with two men and a net. An exceptional catch for a six-hour
period of fishing may run as high as Cr$600,00 and usually
averages between Cr$300,00 and Cr$400,00. When two canoes [435]
fish together the total catch is divided equally between
the two. The *resse* and *abaladeira* fishermen estimate that
they can earn an average of Cr$15,00 every day of the year. [434]
This is considered relatively good, for they do not fish constantly.
After a few profitable days they are inclined to give [461]
up for a period of time, resting and enjoying themselves.

The *calão* is another large net requiring at least six men [461]
to manipulate it, working from the canoe and from the water
as with the deep net. It is used to catch fish of all sizes except
the very small *xangó* and shrimp. The net is 780 feet

226 long and has ropes on each end 420 feet long. This net de-
mands a large canoe. The usual size in use is 30 feet long.

226 Few of the fishermen own their own *calão*--most rent it
427 from a merchant who has one. It is rented by the master on
a long-term basis rather than for just one trip. It is said that
the master "*toma conta da rede*," meaning that he not only is
fishing with the net, but also repairs it and dyes it when need-
ed. The owner of the net, who usually also owns the canoe
226 and the paddles, receives 20 per cent of the profits of each
trip. The remainder is divided among the six men, although
the master and *baixador* each receive one-third more than the
[435] other four. Depending on how the fish are running, the *calão*
may catch as much as Cr$1.000,00 to Cr$1.500,00 worth of
fish per trip, or as little as Cr$120,00 worth. Two trips a
day are made when the fishing is good. There are only eight of
these nets in the town, and they are worth about Cr$1.500,00
apiece. The *calãozinho* is a smaller net of the same type,
sometimes called the *redinha*, or little net. Although its op-
[178] eration is almost the same as that of the larger net, it re-
quires only four men to maneuver it. However, it is becoming
[461] less and less popular as the *resse* increases in popularity.

On land, good care must be taken of the nets. After the
227 fishing, the nets are carried up along the beach to the drying
racks, long lines of poles over which the nets are spread. As
they dry the master checks them, looking for holes which he
immediately sews with a wooden bobbin and cotton thread.
[824] The nets are hand-woven of cotton, and dyed in water in which
the bark of the red *mangue* has soaked. This turns the white
cotton a dark reddish brown and protects it from the action
of the salt water and the sun. A new net must be soaked in
this dye every two or three days, and later every eight days.
227 The *resse*, *abaladeira*, and *tarrafa* are frequently woven by
286 women, and, unless worked on steadily, these nets may take
as long as eight months to make. With steady work a circular
[462] casting net can be made in about twelve days. The women are
(461) paid Cr$12,00 per box of cotton line which contains twenty-
five spools of cotton thread, and it takes five boxes to make
[435] an average-size net. The other nets require heavier thread
and take much longer to make. The *calão* and the deep net are
made by men, and a year is not considered too long for the
[824] manufacture of one. *Piassava*, a plant fiber which grows in
the Recôncavo, is used as line. The fishermen of Vila Recôn-
227 cavo go to the southwestern part of the bay to purchase it. It

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is very rough, though strong. Most of the men complain about 227
it, for it cuts their hands when they are fishing and the action
of salt water on the cuts inflames their hands badly.

There are between seventy-five and one hundred canoes in 501
Vila Recôncavo, of all sizes, from 16 to about 50 feet long.
They come from the southern part of the state, and cost between
Cr$1.000,00 and Cr$6.000,00 apiece, depending on
their size. They are made of *vinhatico preto*, a large tree [313]
from which an entire canoe can be hollowed out. As the canoes
grow older, they are strengthened inside by the addition
of ribs. The center support (*pé do banco*) has a hole in it
through which a mast can be stepped for sailing. The fishermen
use a variety of sails, but usually a simple square sail called
traquête. Four flour sacks sewn together make a passable [428]
square sail. The canoes last a long time and are handed down
from generation to generation. A hundred years is not an uncommon
age for such a craft.

The majority of fishermen cannot swim well and have a 501
great respect for the water on two counts: the water is deep, 226
which to them implies danger, and it is said to hide large,
man-eating fish. There are stories of three men who have [481]
disappeared in the last few years, snatched away by fish. One [825]
was a *baixador*, and the other two fell overboard. Falling is
not uncommon, for often a man steps on a small fish on the
bottom of the canoe or simply slips on the wet wood, loses
his balance, and goes overboard, as the canoes are narrow-beamed
and unstable. In their canoes they are fearless, and
will go anywhere in any weather. Severe storms which arise
suddenly are ridden out in the canoe, which generally lies at
anchor while the men lie under cover of the sail, peering out
occasionally to see if the weather is clearing. Many of them, [164]
however, become violently ill on a larger boat during a storm.

Winter is the most productive season for fishing, although 226
the most uncomfortable. There are many storms, and the [221]
rains are more or less constant. But the fishermen say that
the mixture of salt water with the fresh water from small rivers [132]
emptying into the bay seems to produce many more fish
than in the summer months. The fishermen dress only in a
pair of shorts and a straw hat when fishing, and remain in the [291]
cold rain for hours on end. Colds are common among them, [164]
as is rheumatism among the older men.

There is always a market for fish. There is a discussion 226
currently going on in Vila Recôncavo, for some of the older 43

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226 men say that the fish are leaving, while others say there are
43 just as many as ever. It is a difficult thing to prove one way
or the other, for written records of the annual catches are
only recent. However, there is no such thing as being unable
to sell the fish they bring in. Many people in town have in-
[226] creased their consumption of fresh fish as a result of infla-
tion, for it is less expensive than dried or fresh meat. The
[458] fishermen themselves eat a great deal of fish, always keep-
ing enough out of a catch for their own family. The planters
of the rural area complain that the fresh fish never arrive at
the plantations any more as they did in the past. This is prob-
[251] ably due to the icehouse in the town. The fishermen sell first
to their "usual customers," the women who work with *xangó*
and shrimp; what is left is sold to the icehouse to be packed
and shipped to Bahia, rather than being sent out to the coun-
try.

226 The *jereré*, a small basketlike net built around an iron ring
1 1/2 feet in circumference, is used by women and children
along the shore and is part of a subsistence activity. It catches
[252] only a small crab (*siri*), an occasional eel, and other small
fish which are cooked for the table in the form of *moqueca*,
[262] a sort of stew highly seasoned with peppers and *dendê* oil.
The tideswamps abound in a large crab called the *caranguejo*,
[857] which is also highly prized for the table. Children often catch
these, but a man who does so is called a *caranguejeiro*, a
derogatory term. The hunter seeks the crab by sticking his
arm down into its hole, which is usually very deep, at least
[134] arm's length. As a result he is always covered with the thick
black mud so typical of the tideswamps. Often a *tropeiro de*
[443] *cima* comes to the town and commissions someone to catch
the crabs, which he wraps carefully in mud and leaves and
carries to the northern hinterland to sell.

463 The second largest subgroup in Group 3 is composed of the
241 twenty-four gardeners (*roçeiros*) who are engaged in small-
scale commercial farming, rather than subsistence horti-
culture. They live in town and have their small fields on the
[427] outskirts of Vila Recôncavo. All of these fields are located
on the plantation Engenho Da Vila ("P" on map of community),
and they range from one, two, or three acres in size to as
241 many as fifteen acres, rented from the plantation at Cr$100,00
an acre per year. The major crops are manioc, bananas, and
to a lesser extent tobacco, sugar cane for chewing (*cana de
chupar*), corn, beans, and squash. Because there are only 265

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Because there are only 265 241
acres of manioc under cultivation in the entire county, production
is far below the amount of farina consumed, and it is 43
necessary to import the milled manioc tuber which constitutes [262]
the major dietary item of the people. In 1951 a municipal law
was passed prohibiting the exportation of farina. Three times [114]
during the author's stay in the town there was a pronounced
lack of farina, when there was almost none to be bought and [731]
its price per liter rose from one to three *cruzeiros*. That
year's drought was also partly responsible for the shortage.

Bananas are the only commercial export crop of the gardeners. 245
There are approximately 15,000 banana trees in the
county, producing for the commercial market an annual production 43
of 177,000 arms (*cachos*) of bananas, providing an income [442]
of Cr$500.000,00. The fruits are sold to a middleman
from Bahia who knows most of the gardeners in the area. Once
a week, or every two weeks, he arrives at the town in a large
sailboat to receive the fresh bananas, which he then takes to
Bahia and sells. Sometimes a gardener sells an arm of bananas
to a woman in town who then resells them to townspeople. Few
people in town have to buy them, however, for each household
has at least one banana tree in the back yard. An acre of land [311]
supports about 144 banana trees, which when well cared for
produce 1,500 arms a year. The fruits are sold in cargoes
of fifty arms at Cr$160,00 a cargo, so that one acre earns
about Cr$5.000,00 a year. This sum is almost entirely profit,
for gardeners do most of their own work, except when they
have too much land for one man to take care of properly.
Hired help is paid in accordance with the service performed: 245
ten *cruzeiros* for cutting fifty arms of bananas, twenty for
transporting them to the dock if the gardener does not have his 46
own animals, and a hundred *cruzeiros* an acre for "cleaning,"
i.e., cutting down and burning old stalks and leaves and keeping
the weeds cut down.

Manioc presents a slightly different case, for the raw product 252
must be processed before it is consumed. The manioc root
from which farina is made is the poisonous variety and must
be peeled and grated, pressed to remove the juice, and then
toasted. The final product is a white powder, fine or coarse
depending upon the type of grater used. Most of the local product
is a coarse type (*farinha de guerra*). One of the gardeners
has a flour house where the tubers are converted into [427]
flour. He mills his own manioc there and lets others use the
machinery, charging them one liter of farina out of each ten
they produce.

252 they produce. The juice which is squeezed out is saved, and
starch is extracted from it to be used in pressing clothes. The
nonpoisonous variety of manioc (aipim) is used to a much
smaller extent. Usually the tuber is boiled in water and then
eaten as though it were a potato, for it does not need any processing to render it edible.

241 Ten of the twenty-four gardeners concentrate on manioc,
463 while the others raise bananas. Most of them also grow their
own household subsistence crops, scattered among the manioc and bananas, such as corn, beans, squash, and often a
few shoots of excellent tobacco. Many of them also produce a
quarter or half acre of a heavy type of sugar cane (cana de
chupar) which is stripped of its bark, cut into short pieces,
and masticated, the pulp being spit out after the person has
[146] sucked out the juice. Almost everyone indulges in this, and
[825] the sugar which is absorbed is undoubtedly a great source of
energy. The plots (roças) are fenced and protected by an ox
[789] skull stuck on one of the fence posts to keep out the evil eye.

There are many gardeners to the west of the town who rent
241 their small plots from either the Engenho da Vila or the federal school. This area has not produced sugar cane for many
463 years, for it lacks the surface covering of massapê. These
554 gardeners are often called matutos ("hicks"), real backwoodsmen who get along on subsistence agriculture and seldom leave
[427] their rural neighborhood. They are as far removed from contact with modern civilization as anyone could be while living
in the Recôncavo. They live in well-hidden, small houses of
mud and thatch, and one can ride through this section without seeing anyone.

443 The peddlers (ambulantes) listed in Group 3 have their
463 houses in Vila Recôncavo but go from town to town selling
their wares. While they do some trading at the fairs they also
[605] cover a regular route independent of the fairs. Compadresco,
the system of godparentship, is important to them, for the
houses of such relations give them a base of operations in every town they visit. One of the three is a man who buys and
sells jewelry, and the other two are women; one sells cloth
for dresses and the other sweets (doces), peanuts, and dried
shrimp. The latter is one of the famous street merchants
(bahianas) of Salvador; she sits on a street corner before a
portable table selling favorite Bahian snacks such as acarajé
and abará. She goes to Salvador on the boat on Saturdays,
Tuesdays, and Thursdays, returning to Vila Recôncavo the

following days to make new supplies. On the return trip she 443
brings wheat flour, peanuts, potatoes, and whatever is not 463
available in Vila Recôncavo, as special orders (encomendas)
for people in the town, who pay the price of the article plus
a small percentage for her trouble in doing the shopping.

The people of Group 3 do most of their own labor; the men 463
follow their trade while their womenfolk do the housework, [462]
care for the children, fetch water and firewood, and do their
own laundry. This group also uses the batalhão for house [342]
building and repairing, although many employ the services of
a carpenter to do the woodwork or a bricklayer to make a
foundation, in contrast to the people of the preceding group,
whose houses are usually built with a minimum of crude wood-
work and without masonry foundations. The majority of men [361]
in this group, the fishermen, live in the lower part of town,
in the areas known as Boqueirão, Caquende, and Cortume (see
map of town). The others are scattered throughout the town,
up the hill in back of the area of sobrados, and on the side [346]
of the hill sloping down to the beach. The fishermen have
their own chapel built near the beach, which they support with [764]
the tithe (dizimo), a tenth of their earnings. The people in the
fishing group seldom go up the hill to the older part of town,
feeling that they do not belong there.

A few words need to be said about Group 4, which consists 463
of thirty-one people who do not fit into the other three groups. 464
Eleven of them, who listed themselves as unemployed, are unskilled persons, without a trade, and without a patron or service employment skill. For the most part they are women, and although an examination of the census data shows that they have no visible means of support, they do engage in subsistence activities such as carrying water, cutting spits for xangô, making dendê palm oil, or making fish nets, but not on a regular contract basis. Since they engage in a variety of small independent activities and work for different people at different times, they listed themselves as unemployed in the sense of being without a regular occupation.

Nine people in Group 4 lived in the town at the time of the census but worked at the Usina São Pedro. Three men worked on the sugar plantation nearest town, preferring to live in town rather than on the plantation, since the trip back and forth is so short. And, finally, the group includes eight people who were employed by the Institute of Vila Recôncavo as nurses, pharmacists, bookkeeper, and bartender. These people

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464 were included in Group 4 because they worked for a nonprofit
charitable institution.

Occupationally, the town dwellers differ sharply from the
464 people of the rural area of the community. Their work rarely
184 requires them to go out of town to the rural area. Of the
entire working force of the town, only twelve men are
463 employed in the sugar industry. Even during the harvest season,
632 the town does not supply men to work in the cane fields or the
[429] factory. However, the few people in town who have mules
[492] occasionally rent them to planters during the harvest season to
help carry the cane. The twenty-five petroleum workers have
to leave town each day for work, but their work is also very
different from that of any of the rural dwellers.

463 In the town, as on the plantations, there is specialization
184 and division of labor. Among the fishermen, each man fishes
constantly with one or two types of net. Change from one
type of net to another is unusual and disliked. A fisherman
seldom supplements his fishing by planting a garden. Instead,
he depends upon his catch of fish to give him enough money
to buy garden produce, as well as meat and manufactured
articles. In his turn, the gardener never fishes, depending
upon the returns from his garden to buy what he does not
produce.

[512] Daily routine for the fisherman varies considerably
because it depends closely upon the tides, while the daily
routine of merchants, teachers, and bureaucrats, as well as
household servants and craftsmen, follows a more citylike
pattern, beginning at about seven in the morning and ending
[221] late in the evening. There is also less seasonal variance in
the work of the town dwellers, for it does not depend upon the
planting and harvesting of crops as does that of the rural
workers.

369 The town and plantation ways of life also vary considerably
557 with respect to paternalism, which plays a much smaller part
in the life of the town dweller. Most of the municipal
184 bureaucrats have patrons among the rural landowners who have
placed them in their bureaucratic positions. Bureaucrats, in
turn, are to a smaller extent the patrons of people living in
the town, particularly of their household servants. Although
they have neither the financial resources nor the prestige to
provide the security which a rural landowner can offer his
people, they do what they can to help whenever asked. This
help often takes the form of asking their own patrons for help

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for another person. In this way paternalism helps to link the 369
two subcultures together. Nevertheless, the town subculture 557
is much more of a money culture, and in general the people 184
of the town are more independent than those of the rural area.

6. Class and Race

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IT WAS the colonial sugar-cane plantation system which gave the Recôncavo many of its characteristic traditions, and which formed patterns of class and race or color relations which have persisted in the region in a modified form. [167] More than three million Negroes were imported from Africa during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and a large proportion of them were brought to northeastern Brazil. The Portuguese plantation owners became rich and formed a regional aristocracy which led a luxurious and ostentatious way of life. The slaves and their masters formed two distinct social groups. As the colony developed, intermediate groups came into existence. As early as 1549 there existed a small independent group of people, composed of Europeans and mestiços, for many Europeans who came to the colony did not receive land grants. They were merchants, soldiers, or priests in the colony, gente pequena (small people), free but without the social and political influence of the landowners. The mestiços date back to the times when Portuguese ships first began to touch the coast of Brazil, even before colonization began. A notable example is Caramurú, a Portuguese sailor who was stranded on the shore of what is now Bahia and who had a large mestiço family by the time the city of Salvador was founded in 1549.[1]

The early period of colonization is crucial to an understanding of the Brazilian class complex of today, since ap-

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[1] See Thales de Azevedo, Povoamento da cidade do Salvador, (Bahia, 1949), pp. 57 ff.

parently the criteria for class distinctions were evolved and 175
"set" at that time. The white Portuguese males, and the few 56
Portuguese women present, were the owners of the land and of the people, both Indian and Negro, who were drawn into the cultural milieu which became Brazilian society. They were the group who set up and presented the ideal behavior patterns to the others. They were at the peak of the status and prestige hierarchy, while the slave was at the bottom. Thus was established the original dichotomy of the whites as upper-class and the colored people as lower-class. As colonial development continued, other factors were added to this basic one by the will of the whites. For it was the white group which was primarily responsible for the creation of the mestiço, and it was the white who placed this new mestiço socially between himself and the darkest colored person.

It is clear that color distinctions arose along with the cre- 175
ation of the multishaded mestiço group, and that at the same 563
time other factors were brought into being, qualifying that of 565*
color, such as education, family, and occupation. White masters who had children by dark slaves often raised them as legitimate if they were light-skinned, that is, if the difference between father and child was not too great. In such a case the child could become a member of the upper end of the social hierarchy, with education, family, and a position in which he could command others rather than do any manual labor.
This was particularly the case when the white master did not 175
have a legitimate, European wife to bear him children. If the 563
difference between father and offspring was too great for the 565*
child to be easily acceptable as the son of a European, the 848
child was nevertheless not infrequently partially recognized and helped by the father in some fashion. He then took his place among the gente pequena, free but illegitimate and rather dark-skinned. With marked Negroid features his status was even lower than the European gente pequena. An illegitimate child who proved to be clearly Negroid was likely to be left
in bondage with its mother. Thus, early in Brazilian society 175
the degree of skin darkness and the kind of facial features and 563
hair form became important. Opportunity for personal ad- 565*
vancement was linked with similarity to the white European, who was the giver of status and who liked to give higher status to those in his image.

Until 1888 there were two major social categories: slaves 175
and nonslaves. Within the nonslave group, however, there 565*
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*565
567 were definite subdivisions or classes, with the white European landowner at the top and the darkest-colored free laborer at the bottom. This bottom group grew constantly as a result of the addition of manumitted slaves, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Abolition of slavery removed the strongest barrier to mobility for the largest homogeneous segment of Brazilian population, that of the slaves. Overnight the former slaves became the bottom rank of a new prestige system based mainly on five major criteria: economic power or wealth, profession, education, family, and color. As the lower ranks swelled in size after the abolition, color decreased in importance for mobility, as the other four factors became increasingly meaningful for this large segment of the population. Because of the fact that for three hundred years such a large part of the nonslave population had been colored or *mestiço*, and there was already in existence a social scale which included them, the entrance of the former slaves into free society did not upset what was already a fully functioning class system, even though the addition of so many people to the bottom class made this by far the largest, numerically.

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*565 The abolition of slavery also gave increased emphasis to class competition, or at least to the possibilities of competition among a greatly enlarged number of people. Nevertheless, the gap between the top of the hierarchy, the regional aristocracy, and any of those below remained as great as before, restricting class competition to the members of the lower classes. Few people from below were able to enter the uppermost group unless they were white and had in some way accumulated sufficient wealth. Some merchants moved into this class through the purchase of property as former aristocratic families died out. As time went on, many people in the upper brackets of the middle class maintained easy social relations with the upper class.

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*565 However, formal marriage between colored people of the ranks below and white people of the upper class has always been forbidden; the small group of landowners and other upper-class people continued to intermarry as they had for centuries. Nevertheless, even this barrier has broken down occasionally, for upper-class people have married and do marry persons known to be of mixed descent. Usually, however, the *mestiço* partner in such a union is very light-skinned and comes from a family in good economic circumstances which

has already been accepted by other members of the upper class as their equal or nearly so. 175 563 565*

Race or color prejudice finds its strongest expression at just this point--marriage into the upper class--but even here, if the *mestiço* is sufficiently light-skinned, educated, and well mannered, he or she can and does marry into the best families. The importance of the "bleaching process" in this society cannot be overestimated, for apparently the trend is toward lighter skins and straighter hair on a national scale. In the case of a marriage between one known to be of mixed descent and a member of an upper-class family, no point is ever made of the fact that one partner is "less white" than the other. Aside from the question of marriage into the small top group, color merges in importance with the other criteria, such as economic situation and education, in the contention for class position.

565* The three-class system which has been implied in the foregoing passages has recently been thoroughly described.[2] Although finer local distinctions have called for the addition of a fourth class here, Vila Recôncavo provides an excellent example of the various national classes. As in all discussions about this community, the urban-rural distinctions must be kept in mind. The local class system may be portrayed as follows: 565* 369 463

TABLE 2
SOCIAL CLASSES IN VILA RECÔNCAVO

	Urban	Rural
Class A	none	landowners
Class B	local bureaucrats, merchants, professional people	plantation administrators, mill technicians, specialists, office help
Class C	fishermen, gardeners, craftsmen	millworkers, field hands
Class D	laundresses, servants, persons without steady employment or craft	none

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[2] Charles Wagley, ed., *Race and Class in Rural Brazil* (Paris, 1952), pp. 144 ff.

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The above scheme shows that Class A, composed of landowners, who in this community are sugar-cane planters, is found only in the rural area of Vila Recôncavo. As has already been indicated, this class still follows the old pattern of the plantation master in that its members are part-time residents of the county, maintaining winter homes in the capital. This class is locally composed of seventeen adults and their sixteen children. A total of five families are represented, three of which are related to one another through marriage. These people have no competition from below in Vila Recôncavo. In the capital they are part of the national upper class, and as such are subject to all the stress and strain of any cosmopolitan "high society" group. They are largely descendants of former plantation masters, barons, viscounts, and other former aristocrats, who belonged traditionally to the national, as well as the local, upper class. Other members of these families are successful lawyers, doctors, and educators, and their political participation in state and federal matters is as traditional as their landowning. They belong to the upper class because they are legitimate descendants of former white aristocrats with long family traditions, because they are large-scale landowners and therefore major economic agents, because they are highly educated, some of them holding advanced degrees from European or North American universities, and because they engage in traditional gentlemen's professions such as law, medicine, and engineering.

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This is the group which is rapidly shedding the constraints of traditional behavior and embracing new ideas which come to them from Europe and North America. In contrast, the class immediately below them has for its goals and its patterns of ideal behavior the now historic upper-class traditions such as the double sex standard, the cloistering and protection of women, and dignity of dress and formal manners.

On the local scene it can be said that it is impossible for anyone to move up into Class A, for while its relations with the lower classes are cordial, they take place on the level of paternalism. The gulf between this small upper class and any of the classes below it is so great that it is inconceivable that anyone should cross it. In Salvador this upper class is considerably larger and less homogeneous, and although the usual pattern within this class is for social life to be spent _em familia_--that is, in extended family gatherings rather than gatherings of several different families--the class is

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constantly growing, or at least changing. New members are
added, people who have made their mark on the society and
who, although they have less family tradition behind them, are
on the whole acceptable to the elite.

Locally the upper-class members are addressed by the formal 565*
term o senhor and a senhora, at times by meu patrão or 576
meu branco (my white), frequently by title name, such as "Dr.
Louis," and in some cases by the traditional intimate term of
yoyô (for a man) and yayá (for a woman). At times even the
very formal, older term of Vossa Excelencia (Your Excellency)
is used. Yoyô is an old term formerly used by some slaves
toward their masters, and although it is generally restricted
to white people, there are occasions when a member of a mulatto
family is known to his intimates as yoyô. With rare exceptions,
members of the upper class address all those below
them simply as você, and usually use the imperative form
of the verb in giving directions. These two linguistic devices [182]
tend to strengthen and maintain the differences between these
groups of people.

Relations between members of Class A and those below are 565*
simple. As has already been stated, the landowners avoid the
town of Vila Recôncavo, and it is seldom that Class B town 571
people are invited to a social gathering at a plantation or at
the factory, so that these two classes are rarely in social
contact. Since the rural Class B consists mainly of overseers [466]
and other employees of Class A, relationships between them
are those of employee and employer. However, when a planter
celebrates a special occasion such as a birthday, the overseers
are invited, and may "drop in" as a matter of form or
courtesy; they escape as soon as possible, for they are rarely
included in the brincadeiras (plays, or jokes) of the owners
and their guests. For the most part the overseers and others
of their class come alone, without their wives and families.
This is an important indication of class position, for as a rule
the wife of an overseer feels embarrassed in the company of
gente (people) and refuses to go even when specially invited.
The very strong em familia pattern, combined with the intimacy
of the large families, makes it extremely difficult for
a lower-class person to feel any sort of equality at such a
gathering. 565*

During the course of field work the author was given a party, 574
a Reis, a kind of surprise party which takes place during 123
the period following the sixth of January, the Day of Kings.
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A group of people decide to "take a party of kings" to someone's house. They wait until the lights in the house go out late at night and then knock on the door, playing and singing a song which is traditional for the purpose. The owner must then open the house and let everyone in to dance and make merry. The surprise element has been removed, for it is now considered courteous to sound out the householder to see whether he would like to be the recipient of such a party, and also to give him time to prepare food and drink. The householder also has the privilege of inviting anyone he wants who might be overlooked by those who organise the party. A group of young men approached the author in the prescribed manner, and in due course all arrangements were completed. The young men were to supply an electric phonograph and records for the dancing, and the author was requested to invite the rural planters, especially those with daughters.

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A group of twenty-four planters and about a hundred townspeople, factory technicians, overseers, and a few men of urban Class C came to the party. The planters arrived in a truck a little early and entered the house, which was then closed and the lights turned off. Shortly afterwards the others arrived at the door and knocked, and the band began to play the long serenade. (A band was brought along for the song, which is an important part of the *Reis*; but nowadays no one likes to dance to a hometown band when records are available, so the men played only the serenade and then put their instruments away.) At the end of the song, the doors and windows were opened and the guests began to pour in.

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The rooms of the house were small, but all the furniture had been removed to make room for dancing in the two largest rooms, which were joined by two wide doors. At the beginning of the party everyone was very formal and shy; the young men remained on one side of the room, the young women on the other, and the entire planter group in a huddle by itself. Gradually things got under way, and as drinks were served to *esquentar a gente* (warm up the people) as many as could dance in the cramped quarters did so. For the first hour or so all the guests mingled, dancing with one another; then gradually the members of Class A began to pull away, at first beginning to dance among themselves and finally usurping a third room in which they danced away from the others, uninterrupted by anyone.

Reactions to this were varied in the days after the party

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when the affair was discussed. The young men were rather disappointed by the withdrawal of the upper-class girls, for they had looked forward to dancing with them with great expectations. Their disappointment, however, was expressed by saying, "We dance differently, and since it was the first time together there wasn't time to get used to each others' style." Some of the older men simply asked, "What did you expect? You know they don't mix with us." The planters, on the other hand, enjoyed the party but were embarrassed by the fact that they had created a separate group and ended up by saying that "the only kind of good party is a family party, which it was for us."

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This party was by no means typical, for the very existence of such an affair was due to the presence of a stranger in the town who was able to bring together the different elements. Under other conditions it would not have taken place. Under the novel conditions, each group after completing the formalities withdrew to itself, enjoying the party and creating no embarrassing moments for the host. Reflection on what had happened pointed out to everyone the distance between the two groups, but there was no bitterness or resentment shown by anyone. It passed as an incident, and afterwards people discussed only the part of the party they had enjoyed, ignoring the rest.

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Class A members participate in a broader schedule of activities in Salvador, where not only planters, but also professional, commercial, and industrial people mix. The children of Class A go to private schools, belong to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (organizations which have not as yet penetrated the rural zone) and to social clubs for sports and dancing. Their parents participate in a round of social activities including the theater, lectures, dances, and anniversaries. Birthdays are usually important celebrations, when as many members of the extended family as possible gather. For special occasions, such as a wedding in other parts of the family, they may go to Rio de Janeiro; at other times they go there simply for a vacation or on a shopping tour. Those who own plantations usually spend only the summer harvest season in the country. It is vacation time for the children, and they invite relatives and friends to spend some time with them swimming, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. The entire area is their playground. Their parents participate in these activities as much as possible after their official duties of plan-

*565 tation administration are over. In general, however, neither
the children nor the parents mix with the permanent residents
of Vila Recôncavo. Although as small children they may have
a worker's son as a constant playmate, by the time they are
teenagers this relationship has usually faded into a fond memory.
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565 The standard of living of this class is far above that of any
of the other local groups. It is important to realize that because
458 of the fluctuations of the sugar market, members of this
class have not always had fluid wealth at their command, while
at other periods they have been undeniably wealthy. But even
during a slump they have been able to raise money when necessary.
One of the major reasons that planters turned to the
professions was the need to assure themselves of a continued
income when the sugar market falls. At such times their main
activities are directed toward earning a living in the city. But
at those times when sugar producing is profitable the practicing
* of the activities becomes a strain, and one or the other
565 must suffer. Nevertheless, at any time these people have
511 earned enough to maintain a standard of living which compares
favorably with that of the upper class in any large city. Households
are complete with refrigerators, radios, and other electrical
[416] appliances which must be imported. Many have automobiles,
receive magazines from abroad, follow Parisian
[207] dress styles, take interest in international affairs, and in
general lead a life of wide interests. In the rural zone their
(184) houses are much better than those of any others, often having
running water, electricity, and a full range of service provided
[357] by servants. Usually the household servants move from
[166] country to city with the family.

Class B in the rural zone of the community is made up of
*565 plantation overseers, factory technicians, and white-collar
571 workers of the factory offices. It is almost as small as Class
A, comprising about twenty adult members. As in the case of
the planters, who associate with other planters outside the
community, the overseers of various plantations have reunions.
There is much more social contact between the overseers
and the mass of workers, however, than between the
(574) planters and the workers. The planters usually know all the
workers on their plantations, as well as their families; but
although there is frequent visiting and chatting between the
women of the two groups and between the males of the two
groups, there is little basis for conversation. The planta-

The planta-
tion worker's world is small, and conversational topics are 565 *
limited to family matters such as births, deaths, marriages, 571
sickness, and other intimate details of personal life, the [521]
problems of work, and difficulties of any sort. The planter can
know the daily life and thoughts of the workers only through
observation, for he himself lives quite differently. However,
his knowledge of the workers is apt to be profound in spite
of the differences, and he knows much more of their lives
than they know of his. On the other hand, visiting between [574]
the workers and the members of Class B is on a much more
equal basis, for the differences between their modes of living
and thinking are small.

When the workers are invited to a party by the planters, 565 *
it is usually an affair given for them, such as a Christmas 571
celebration. At such a time the planter is host and spectator, 574
rather than host and participant. At other times the workers
may get together a song and dance group, a samba, and go to
the owner's house for the evening. This is frequently ex-
plained as "keeping the patron from being lonely." Again the [535]
owner is spectator, for the samba, performed exclusively by
women, is a type of folk dance seldom engaged in by the more
sophisticated upper class.

Class B in the rural area is only beginning to feel any sort 565 *
of group consciousness, for the occupational institutions it represents are relatively new and it is not yet aligned in any way with the corresponding class in town. There are two overseers who lack any formal education--indeed, who cannot read or write. In all cases the male members of this class have set up and maintained a family, educating their children and seeing to it that they marry as well as possible. As a rule such men are "self-made"--they have risen from the ranks of workers as a result of their own ability, sagacity, sense of responsibility, and desire to improve themselves. They are distinguished from the workmen by these traits, which seem to develop even further as they have the opportunity to use their initiative.

Members of this group usually acquire numerous posses- 565 *
sions of their own, such as horses, oxen and carts, mules, 423
and donkeys which can be put to gainful use. They also op- [422]
erate small stores on their plantations--in one case even a
chain of stores, one on each of three plantations. They also [443]
try to buy a small farm somewhere nearby. Frequently the [466]
employer facilitates such acquisitions as a sort of bonus,
lending money or even giving some to the overseer.

* lending money or even giving some to the overseer. Some of
565 the members of Class B even acquire property in Salvador
423 or in Centro, such as a house or houses which they may rent.
* It is the possession of this material wealth, plus the position
565 of responsibility and authority, the greater proximity to the
owner, and the invariably legalized status of the man's fam-
183 ily which distinguish him from those below, placing him in a
class by himself. In the case of the higher-placed white-col-
lar workers of the factory, education is also important.

*565 In material possessions other than those already listed,
Class B differs considerably from the other two classes, hav-
422 ing much less than Class A but much more than Class C.
[342] Their houses are always better and larger than those of the
workers, and they usually have electricity supplied by the
[365] plantation. They generally have complete sets of manufac-
tured dining and living room furniture, better bedroom fur-
[352] niture than the scanty belongings of the workers, china, rath-
(412) er than the clay dishes (nagé) of the workers, and table serv-
ice for as many as a dozen persons. Usually their clothes are
[415] better and more numerous. Overseers are well known for
their use of khaki coats, shirts, ties, and riding breeches,
(291) their well-polished leather boots and their felt hats, in con-
trast with the more informal sports clothes of the landowners
and with the ragged, tight trousers and shirt and the straw hat
of the shoeless rural worker.

*565 Class B in the town of Vila Recôncavo is represented by
Group 1 as described in the preceding chapter, with a few ex-
ceptions such as the minor municipal employees and a few of
the smaller-scale merchants and lower-rated petroleum work-
ers. Because there are no representatives of Class A in the
town, Class B represents the top of the urban social scale.
It is a class which has long existed in the town and which has
always been composed of more or less the same occupation
groups. For the most part, members of this stratum live on
the hill which constitutes the old part of Vila Recôncavo, and
[162] seldom go down to the newer section. There are fourteen per-
sons residing in town, plus their eight children, who are con-
sidered pure Caucasoid; they are all members of this local
[792] upper class. Three of them are foreign-born Franciscans who
do not participate in much of public life once their official
duties are completed. The others are brancos da terra ("whites
of the land," a term which will be explained later in this chap-

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ter) and homens de côr (men of color) including a few pretos (blacks). 565*

Most individuals in this class are conscious of their "superiority" over the bulk of the town population, because of their higher economic status, the kind of work they do (usually white-collar), their better educations, better family traditions, and whiter, or at least lighter, skins. They are conscious of the fact that they are at the top of the scale on the local scene, and that to go any higher is impossible in the town. To do this they would have to move to a city. If one had a special ability he might be able to improve his condition in a large city, but he might also remain unrecognized. In the town he is the "big frog in the little pond," and this seems to give a certain amount of satisfaction to many. [557]

People of Class B seek to maintain favorable relations with the rural landowners, who dispense the municipal patronage and have the contacts in Salvador necessary to influence federal and state appointments, since members of their families are frequently state and federal government representatives. Only the merchants of Class B are in a relatively independent position, for they can operate independently of politics. Their market is the town population and is in no way dependent upon trade or patronage from the planters or their workers. There are no traditional merchant families in Vila Recôncavo. All contemporary storekeepers are persons who have worked their way up from fishing or some other activity to storekeeping. 565* 441

This class is slowly growing, and there are certain standards to which all its members conform, such as living in the old part of town, dressing with more care than the lower classes, supporting the church and patronizing the few religious holiday celebrations, sending their children to Salvador for their secondary education, owning radios, good dishes and furniture, displaying family solidarity and good manners, and maintaining a good relationship with members of Class A. But there is little or no cohesion among members of the group. They seldom act as a unit or express a group opinion (except to condemn candomblé, the local variation of African cultism). 565* 183 [571]

The social life of these people is definitely limited and to some extent follows the same pattern as that of the rural members of the same class, in that the men go out more than do their wives. The women of this group remain at home most 565* 517

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517 of the time, visiting little and receiving the local gossip from
their servants. Since the advent of movies, however, it has
[546] become fashionable for husband and wife and sometimes the
children to attend the show together. When the circus comes
[541] to town it is now common for them to go as a family at least
[794] once. As a rule, however, church services are attended sep-
arately, the wives and daughters going together and the men
singly if at all, and standing in the back rather than sitting
[574] with the family. Dinners, card parties, or social gatherings
with friends in the house, such as are common to North Amer-
ican small towns, do not exist here at all. About the only trav-
eling these people do is to Salvador, where they stay with rel-
atives while they make short visits, go to the doctor, or go
* shopping.

565 Even the older members of Class B are less well educated
871 than those of Class A, and do not belong to families which are
nationally prominent. In many cases they have relatives in
Salvador, but in no case do they maintain a second home there.
Although their children may go to primary school in Vila Re-
côncavo, which the children of Class A would never do, they
are sent to Salvador for further education; and several of the
* present generation are studying for degrees in law and med-
565 icine. As has already been pointed out, this class engages in
[571] little social activity in common with Class A, and in almost
none with rural Class B persons. Daughters of families be-
[867] longing to this class are carefully chaperoned and have little
freedom. Their lives are spent at home, sewing, embroidering,
[582] and helping their mothers in the house. Their prospects for
marriage are poor. This applies also to the schoolteachers
*565 who are sent to the town and who also belong to this class.
There is little opportunity for them to marry in Vila Recôn-
582 cavo unless they accept a social inferior, which commonly
875 happens to rural schoolteachers in Brazil. "Felipe," as the
schoolteacher's husband is generally known, is always a "no-
good" supported by his wife. There are two cases in Vila Re-
côncavo of local upper-class wives who work--they are both
schoolteachers, supplementing their husbands' incomes and
* alleviating the dullness of their lives.

565 Class C in the rural area consists of the field hands and the
factory workers, who constitute the major part of the pop-
ulation. There are no "pure whites" in this group, but a scat-
[184] tering of "whites of the land." In general the factory workers
consider themselves superior to the agricultural laborers;

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565* 184 [656] [466]

they are generally conceded to be so by the field hands and the members of classes A and B, because their occupations are more specialized and they work in the mill. There are actually several factors which distinguish them from the field laborers, for in addition to receiving protection by national legislation, including minimum salaries and rights to vacations and medical services, they receive from the factory electric light for their houses and firewood. In addition, factory workers do not plant gardens to supply their farina, and they consider themselves far superior to the agricultural laborers in that their own wives "do not use the hoe" (nao pegam na enxada).

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At the factory nucleus where both millworkers and the agricultural laborers of one plantation live in the same place, the houses of the former are grouped in the middle of the village, clustered about the owner's chalet, while those of the latter are on the fringes, farther from the usineiro's house, the mill, and the large store. The factory workers' houses are better constructed than those of the field laborers. They are mostly of brick with tile roofs, while the field workers' homes are often of wattle-work covered with plaster and painted over. The houses of the factory nucleus follow the old slavequarter pattern. The buildings are long and narrow and divided into apartments under one roof. The factory owns all the houses, which the workers receive rent-free. The factory worker is better paid than the field worker, and consequently has more and better material possessions. His house is better furnished, and he dresses better.

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565* 184 871 [212]

Illiteracy is widespread in the rural area. The factory nucleus has had a state primary school for thirty years, and Pedras, the largest of the factory plantations, has had one for about twenty. As a result the factory workers, as well as the people of Pedras, have had the opportunity to attend four years of primary school. The rural laborers on other plantations, however, have lacked this opportunity in most cases. An exception is the Fazenda das Moças, which has had a school in recent years, for children in the daytime and for adults at night.

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The social life of the workers is almost entirely confined to the place in which they live. Their lives are spent on the plantation except for the days when they walk to the fair in Centro, usually on the Monday following payday. During the summer, when the roads are good for travel, they are busy with the

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517 harvesting and milling. The factory operates twenty-four hours
a day during this season. In the winter, when they have more
[461] leisure, travel is too difficult, for the roads disappear in
*[249] mud. Few of the rural people go to the town of Vila Recôncavo, for it has nothing to attract them except the boat to Salvador and the priest, whom they sometimes visit to have a
[546] Mass said or for a burial. The free movies recently inno-
[562] vated by the Petroleum Council and located a mile from the
factory have been a boon to the rural people, but as a rule
only the men attend. In fact, almost any kind of off-plantation gathering is attended predominantly by men.

*249 On most plantations the casa de farinha is a social gath-
*565 ering place, and both males and females congregate there to
461 talk about the latest news while they work. The women also
gossip at the local well as they fetch water or remain there
[521] washing their clothes. Their everyday lives are busy, and
there is little time for purely social activities. The day be-
[512] gins and ends early. Soon after dark the lights go out, the
houses close, and silence reigns except for the noise coming
from the casa de farinha, which may operate all night, or the
lonesome singing of the caatingueiros housed in the barracks,
* or the strong rhythmic sound of the drums coming from a dis-
249 tant candomblé ceremony. Because there is little work for
*565 women on a plantation, the "extra" girls, those for whom
461 there are no potential husbands, ask the planter to get them
work as domestics in the city; this is usually easy, for there
357 is nearly always someone in Salvador looking for a "good,
strong country girl" to work in the home. Occasionally, if a
worker's son is especially intelligent and industrious, he too
* may be placed in some position in the city.

565 Class C comprises the majority of the population in the town
of Vila Recôncavo and includes most of the occupations listed
in Group 3 of the preceding chapter--that is, fishermen, gardeners, and artisans. There are no "pure whites" in this
class, but, as in the rural area, a few "whites of the land"
and the full range of mestiços, whose various color and social
[361] characteristics will be discussed later. The people of Class
C live for the most part in the lower section of town, in the
areas called Cortume, Largo de Santa Cruz, Rua Nova, Bo-
[423] queirão, Cumbamba, and Caquende. The great majority of them
own their homes, although the land belongs to the Fazenda En-
[427] genho da Vila, to the church, or to the prefeitura, and is rented for a small yearly sum. The houses are small, usually

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The houses are small, usually consisting of a front living room, a corridor with one or two bedrooms, a small dining room, and a kitchen. The furniture is scanty--a miscellany of chairs, benches, and tables, an occasional dish closet, the ever-present pictures of saints, one or two beds, and clay dishes. 565* 342 [352] [353]

As noted earlier, the fisherman could earn more if he wanted to. There is a certain dispraisal of those who attempt to better themselves, though once they have raised their status they are admired. One fisherman in town worked harder than the others, earning slightly more; his house was always in better condition than the others, and his wife took better care of it. She was very neat, and her house and children were always remarkably clean. This family was always ridiculed by its neighbors for trying to be like gente (literally, people, but in Vila Recôncavo carrying the special connotation of upper-class people). Life became so unpleasant for them that they finally moved away. 565* 558

Class C is aware of the difference between it and the town's uppermost class and the planters. The latter constitute a very distant group to most town members of Class C, for there are almost no occasions when the two groups meet. When not pushed to a finer distinction, lower-class people usually recognize two strata--their own and a small but powerful one above them, consisting of the local upper class and planters. Color plays an important role in Class C, for it is generally acknowledged that the whiter one is, the higher in the social scale, in spite of the instances in town where dark mestiços have climbed to the top of the ladder, that is, to the top of Class B. Color is the one classifying criterion which applies to all members of Class C, since many of the other criteria, such as education and family tradition, are inapplicable. These negative considerations, plus the fact that their occupations are all manual, tend to make the group quite homogeneous except for skin color. Nevertheless, the town members of Class C consider themselves definitely superior to the field workers, regarding them as country bumpkins. There is little or no tendency for rural people to move into town, and no one remembers having heard of the marriage of a country person with a town dweller. 565* 829

What has been called Class D in Vila Recôncavo is composed largely of women who have children but no acknowledged husbands. There is no such group in the rural area, because of the pressure brought to bear by the plantation own- 565*

*565 ers to keep households of stable families, even without formal marriage. In Class D are found mostly the washerwomen and ironers listed under Occupation Group 2 in the preceding chapter.

*565 836 837 848 The unwed mother seldom marries, for few men are willing to take a wife who is not a virgin, and fewer still can accept the responsibility of a whole family at once unless the woman has some property to offer along with herself. Once she has had a child a woman loses prestige and status and becomes a mark for men who are looking for an affair. She may even move in with a man for a while. Later, either she leaves him or he leaves her. She must support herself and her offspring, for her father can seldom support another family. As her children grow up, especially the daughters, she hopes for a legal marriage for them; but this is seldom realized for the girls will escape her control just as she herself did. In such a case a woman has little influence and very often cannot force the man to marry her daughter, so that her household is eventually composed of three generations, with two unwed mothers and their children. This is especially true when the young daughters are pretty or, as often happens, light-skinned, as a result of the fact that their fathers often belong to the lighter-colored group of men in town. Often girls from Class D are sent to the city to work as domestics in much the same way as girls from the rural area; there they may marry and avoid a repetition of the cycle, or else they return to their mothers pregnant and unmarried, for few employers will keep a pregnant girl in the house.

125 114 The following data were collected through the use of a questionnaire given after the author had been in the field about nine months. The actual collection was accomplished by the author and two paid assistants. The questionnaire was long and detailed, and each one took approximately three hours to complete.

125 *565 Many people in all the classes did not want to respond, feeling that it was too much an invasion of their privacy. Many said that they did not know how much money they earned over a long period, that they simply spent whatever came into their hands. Others produced written, detailed records of all the money they earned and spent and how they spent it. The total number of samples finally collected was 125. Sixty-two are urban samples from the town of Vila Recôncavo, and sixty-

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three are rural samples from the factory and plantation nuclei. The total sample is divided by classes as follows:

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Urban	Class	Rural
	A	2
11	B	7
41	C	54 (field workers 25; factory workers 29)
10	D	

Class C in the rural zone is divided into two groups, field workers and factory workers, to point out the slight differences between the two groups.

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TABLE 3
MONTHLY INCOME

Urban Average Monthly Income of Head of Family (Cr$)	Class		Rural Average Monthly Income of Head of Family (Cr$)
	A		15.500,00
1.822,72	B		2.040,00
805,85	C	field workers	450,44
		factory workers	847,00
483,74	D		

The economic gap between Class A of the rural area and classes B, C, and D of both the rural and urban areas is quickly apparent. In United States currency the income is roughly $750 per month for Class A, $100 per month for Class B, and only $20 per month for Class D. The figures for Class B, both urban and rural, show how closely the segments of the class correspond in income. However, urban Class C and rural Class C differ in that the urban group's cash income is higher, although it does not approach that of Class B. Although the field workers' income appears to be close to that of urban Class D, the produce from the garden plots to which all field workers are entitled is not included in this figure. Class D, whose income is the lowest, must live on its wages, since members of this class do not have garden plots.

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TABLE 4
TOTAL PROPERTY VALUE

Urban (Cr$)	Class		Rural (Cr$)
	A		5.751.080,00
36.834,54	B		88.652,85
6.954,75	C	field workers	1.251,20
		factory workers	1.633,00
3.991,00	D		

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Total property value again demonstrates the enormous gap between the rural upper class and the classes below. It also shows the members of rural Class B far ahead of urban class B in possession of property. Most of this property consists of small farms and animals. Urban classes C and D have more property than does rural Class C, principally because the town dwellers own their own houses. In addition to this, members of Class C often own their own means of production, such as canoes and fish nets. Both houses and working equipment are supplied to the rural workers by the land owners.

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TABLE 5
HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES

Class		Total expenditure	Expenditure for food
A		10.129,50	3.327,00
B	rural	1.955,91	1.199,28
	urban	1.771,40	1.342,21
C	field workers	522,00	413,00
	factory workers	755,54	522,00
	urban	728,00	571,00
D		440,90	434,00

Approximately one-third of the total expenditures of Class A are for food, while Class B spends about two-thirds of its

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total expenditures for food, just half in total value of what Class A spends. Both Class A and Class B spend more for food alone than the total expenditures of classes C and D. The rural field workers spend the least amount for food, which again reflects their possession of garden plots. 565* 511

Color consciousness runs all through class relations and can even be equated with class to a certain extent. All Class A members are white; Class B has whites and a mixture of the others; Class C is nearly entirely composed of mestiços and blacks with the exception of a few "whites of the land" who are usually considered separately from mestiços; while Class D has light mestiços as well as blacks. "Color consciousness, or "color relations," would better describe the situation in this Bahian rural area than would the term "race relations," for although the Portuguese word raça, directly translatable into English as race, is used in this area to designate the three major racial stocks, American Indian, Negro, and Caucasian, it also means Brazilian in the sense of nationality. It is even more commonly used to describe animals which are pedigreed in contrast with those which are not. When asked questions about race, people are apt to ask first what kind of race is meant. If one speaks of color the situation is much clearer. 565* 563 826

In the United States an absolute "line" is drawn between white and Negro. A person who is not white is a Negro, whatever his percentage of Negro heritage may be. In Vila Recôncavo, this "line" is recognized rather than drawn. A distinction between Negro and white is always kept in mind when classifying an individual. Everyone knows who is "pure" white and who is not. Classification by color is one of the most important aspects of local culture, and one of the most difficult aspects for the outsider to grasp. Recôncavo Bahians feel that one may instantly recognize the difference between a "pure" white and a mixed white-Indian, white-Negro, or Negro-Indian, but they do not let it go at that. They classify or describe minutely each person; they classify according to skin color, hair form, and facial features. Their classifications of physical types are used in everyday conversation. Just as it would be said in the United States that someone is short and fat, the people of Vila Recôncavo will describe a person's color and hair form. 563 826 [171]

In the Recôncavo a white person is called a branco. The term Negro is rarely used to denote a person of African de-

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826 scent. Rather, such a person is called *homem de côr* (man of color). Negro is used abstractly to denote the Negro race, but it is almost never used to single out an individual. *Nêgo* (a softened variation of the word Negro) may frequently be used as a term of endearment, even among whites, and it is sometimes used as a nickname. When a Bahian of the Recôncavo speaks of *indio*, he usually thinks of the Indian of the interior of Mato Grosso or of the Amazon. When he wishes to indicate people of American Indian physical type in the Recôncavo, he generally says *caboclo*, or *caatingueiro*, or sometimes *sertanejo*.

Even the whites are subclassified, divided into two categories, the *louro* (blond), and the *moreno* (brunet). There is still a third term for people with Caucasoid physical characteristics, namely *branco da terra* (white of the land). This term denotes one who is phenotypically white, that is, who has the physical characteristics of a Caucasoid--fair skin, fine features, and "good" (meaning "straight") hair--but whose ancestry has Negro blood. He is generally *moreno* (dark) and is frequently characterized by a slightly yellowish tinge to the skin. The *branco da terra* sometimes also shows traces of *caboclo*, as well as Negro and white, descent. In Vila Recôncavo, the "pure" white man may refer to such a person as a *branco da terra* but will ordinarily call him a *branco*. To the majority of the population, the *branco da terra* is always called white, and no one would ever call anyone a *branco da terra* to his face. He is accorded the same treatment as is any white person by both whites and nonwhites.

In classifying people, skin color is an important factor, but hair form is equally important. If there is any question about what to call a person, his hair is usually the deciding criterion. After skin and hair, facial features (prognathism, nose shape, and thickness of lips) are considered. The many designations used in Vila Recôncavo for the people of Negroid or mixed ancestry can be broken down roughly as follows:

1. The *preto* or *preto retinto* ("dark black") has black, shiny skin, kinky, woolly hair, thick lips, and a flat, broad nose. The *pretos* distinguish among themselves as to what they call *qualidade* (quality), and rank themselves according to minute differences in skin color, nose form, etc. The *preto* with the greatest "quality" is the farthest removed from the usual concept of a Negro, and yet he is still a black. He is a "prettier" black.

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2. The *cabra* (male) and *cabrocha* (female) are generally slightly lighter than the *preto*, with hair growing somewhat longer, but still kinky and unmanageable, facial features somewhat less Negroid, although often with fairly thick lips and flat nose. The *cabra* and *cabrocha* usually lack the definite facial features and shine of the *preto*.

3. The *Cabo Verde* is lighter than the *preto*, but still very dark. The *Cabo Verde*, however, has long, straight hair, and his facial features are apt to be very fine, with thin lips and a narrow, straight nose. He is almost a "black white man."

4. The *escuro*, or simply "dark man," is darker than the usual run of *mestiços*, but the term is generally applied to a person who does not fit into one of the three types mentioned above. The *escuro* is nearly but not quite a Negro with Caucasoid features. He usually has "quality." *Escuro* is a very useful term for the outsider in the Recôncavo.

5. The *mulato* is a category always divided into two types, the *mulato escuro* and *mulato claro* (dark and light mulattoes). The *mulato* has hair which grows perhaps to shoulder length, but which has a decided curl or even kink. It can, however, be straightened. The *mulato*'s facial features vary widely: thick lips with a narrow nose, or vice versa. As a rule, the features are "thicker" than the *branco*'s and "thinner" than the *preto*'s. The *mulato* is generally distinguishable by a yellowish tinge to his skin color, more accentuated than that of the *branco da terra*. His skin color varies from very light to very dark. A *mulato claro*, with straightened hair, thin lips, and a "good" nose, is very much like the *branco da terra*.

6. *Pardo* is a term not often used in speech. It is one of the official classifications used in the census and on identification papers. However, it is used occasionally to describe an individual who is closer to the white than a *mulato claro*. Occasionally *mestiço* children are described as *pardo* during the early years of their lives, before their features become distinctive enough to fit them definitely into one of the other groups. In one case, a little girl of three was called *parda* by her mother. The girl lives with her godfather, who is a *branco da terra*. He lists the girl as white, since her skin is very light and her hair is growing long and only slightly wavy. But her mother says she is a *parda*, because she knows that "her hair may curl up any day, which would make her a *mulata clara*."

7. The *sarará* is not difficult to distinguish. He has very

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light skin, and hair which is reddish or blondish but kinky or curled. His facial features are extremely varied, even more so than the mulato's. There are sararás who would "pass" for white in the United States, but more often the sarará has an unusual appearance: skin which is neither dark nor light, frequently freckled, eyes with a greenish-blue cast, and hair which bleaches easily in the sun. In Vila Recôncavo the sarará is usually found among fishermen and those living on the islands. It is difficult to find a person of this physical type without a good suntan and bleached hair.

8. The moreno has "excellent" skin, "fine-textured" and smooth. He is light-skinned but not white. He has dark hair, which is long and either wavy or curly. It is manageable and does not need straightening. His features are much more Caucasoid than Negroid. Here again a distinction is made between the dark and light morenos; also between these and the moreno branco. Moreno, as used regarding the white, distinguishes the brunet from the blond of the same group.

Few people fit completely into any of these "racial" types. When one has all the defined characteristics of the preto people call him "bem preto" or "bem pretinho" (really black). The same is true of the sarará, bem sarará; or of the moreno, who is called bem moreninho or moreno fino. It is just as difficult to find the ideal type for the other classifications, because there are so many variations. Many times one must point out that an individual is predominantly of one physical type but has one or more characteristics of another type. For instance, one young man in Vila Recôncavo has the characteristics of an escuro, but since most people like him they prefer to think of him as moreno. He has "fine" skin and "thin" facial features, but has tight, kinky hair. People generally refer to him as moreno, adding, "Mas ele tem cabelo ruim" (But he has bad hair). One frequently hears, "He is mulato, but very light." These verbal descriptions paint a vivid picture of the person in question. In Vila Recôncavo, it is not simply a matter of black and white, but of all the shades in between.

A term of classification not listed above, caboclo, is something of a special case. As mentioned earlier, most people with American Indian physical traits have come into the Recôncavo from the sertão during the dry spells of the north. In view of the length of time that people of the north have been periodically coming into the Recôncavo, comparatively few

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have remained. Nevertheless, the population of Vila Recôncavo shows a considerable Indian element, that is, of people with a reddish or bronze tinge to their skin color, more prominent cheekbones than the Africans or whites, and a tendency toward an almond-shaped eye. However, few people in Vila Recôncavo bearing these marks are called caboclos. They are classified instead in the local terms mentioned above, ignoring Indian traits. In Vila Recôncavo, there is a certain dispraisal of the caboclo. He is considered less civilized than the resident of the Recôncavo. He is often known as a better worker, more ambitious, trustworthy, and frugal, but less genial than the easygoing person of the Recôncavo. In the rural area of Vila Recôncavo, each year many caboclo men come to the plantations to work during harvest time. For the most part they stay together, away from the resident workers of the plantation. The plantations construct a type of barracks to accommodate these men, who do their own cooking, care for their own clothes, and spend their evenings gathered around a fire, singing songs of the sertão, apart from the permanent workers. [157] [571]

The following percentages of racial types were taken from a sample of 162 heads of families, using the four major types: [162]

Preto	50,	or 40 per cent
Mulato	59,	or 49 per cent
Caboclo	3,	or 2 per cent
Branco	11,	or 9 per cent

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Each physical type in Vila Recôncavo is thought to have a series of personality traits correlated with physical appearance. Furthermore, these stereotypes of expected behavior reflect the attitude of people toward the various racial types. Two physical types, forexample, the cabra-cabrocha and the sarará, are usually "more to be pitied than censured," for they are considered ugly by most people. There is a feeling that they are unfortunate crosses between parents of physical characteristics which do not mix well. They are thought to lack the definite traits which characterize the other physical types, and "even a preto de qualidade is better than either of these--at least more handsome." Furthermore, people of these physical types are thought to be difficult to deal with. They are sometimes irritable and easily angered. They are the physical types least preferred in Vila Recôncavo; all oth-

563 826 157 ers have some positive qualities. People arrange their preferences in many ways, according to the physical qualities they wish to emphasize.

563 578 557 There is also a series of expressions used by everyone to describe the person who is trying to appear white. It is almost axiomatic that whoever tries to be what he is not is considered ridiculous by all. Both whites and Negroes gossip about the social climber and use the terms "*tem pinta*" (has a "touch of the tarbrush"), or "*tem sangue*" (has Negro blood), or "*é da raça*" (is of the Negro race), or simply "besta" (show-off), "*cheio de arte*" (artful), "*cheio de manha*" (full of little tricks), or "*fala bonito*" (talks pretty).

563 578 There are also many phrases used by lower-class people to ridicule Negroes and *mestiços* who are showing off, or "pushing." Most of these start off with Negro:

> Negro doesn't marry, he gets together.
> Negro doesn't accompany a procession, he runs after it.
> Negro doesn't sit down, he squats.
> Negro in white clothes is a sign of rain.
> Negro doesn't hear Mass, he spies on it.
> Negro at a white man's party is the first to grab and the last to eat.
> Negro's intelligence is the same size as his hair.

563 125 The concepts and fixed ideas which the people of Vila Recôncavo have of these racial types were also revealed in their responses to a pictorial questionnaire devised in the field. A series of eight photographs were shown. These were of people unknown to those answering the questionnaire. They consisted of a male and a female representative of each of the four major racial types, the *caboclo*, the *preto*, the *mulato*, and the *branco*. An attempt was made to keep the photographs from giving any clue to the possible class position of the eight persons. However, the photographs we were able to secure were not entirely satisfactory for our purposes in Vila Recôncavo. [159] The picture of the *caboclo* male was that of a middle-aged man, but of a type considered locally as having a strong personality, while the *caboclo* woman was older and certainly not *simpatica* (pleasant) in the local view. The two *pretos* were both unmistakably *pretos*, and both young. The *mulato* male and female differed one from the other, for the man was definitely a common *mulato* type, while the woman was almost

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a *morena mulata* rather than "pure" *mulata*. She was young and considered much more *simpatica* than any of the other three women presented. The two whites were also both young, but neither was distinguished in any way, and there was doubt in the minds of the people answering the questionnaire as to whether these two were "pure" white or not.

The questionnaire was given to eighty-five people, broken down into the following groups:

18 *brancos*	11 males	7 females
41 *mulatos*	21 males	20 females
18 *pretos*	7 males	11 females
8 *caboclos*	6 males	2 females
85	45	40

Table 6 gives the results as to which racial types were found respectively most physically attractive, most wealthy, best worker, most honest, and most religious.

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TABLE 6
PHYSICAL TYPES

Question	Number of people selected in 1st place			
	Branco	Preto	Mulato	Caboclo
Most attractive man	39*	17	14	15
Most attractive woman	26	3	30	26
Most wealthy man	27	11	9	38
Most wealthy woman	37	8	17	23
Best worker (man)	4	38	13	30
Best worker (woman)	7	22	23	33
Most honest man	11	22	8	44
Most honest woman	15	13	22	33
Most religious man	21	15	13	36
Most religious woman	17	11	17	40

*Underlined numbers indicate the group most frequently selected in first place.

From Table 6 it becomes clear that the ideal of the most attractive male is the white; and that the numerically indicated preference for the female type is the *mulata*--but the *cabocla*, it must be noted, is equally selected with the white.

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Both the mulata and the cabocla (despite her apparent age) of the photographs are of types which have the physical characteristics of the morena, so preferred in Vila Recôncavo. It is surprising that the caboclo male was selected as the wealthiest, in view of the stereotype that it is the white who is generally wealthiest; but I believe that this is due to the fact that people found the photograph of the caboclo to have a rather "distinguished" face, while the white on the photograph was felt to be a young man with what might be considered a "characterless" face. The preto man was chosen as the best worker, which supports the stereotype discussed earlier, while the cabocla was chosen as the best woman worker. This may be explained by the local phrase used to describe her: "Good for nothing else." The caboclos, both male and female, were chosen as most honest and most religious, which is in keeping with the stereotype of the caboclo, who is considered more serious and solemn than the native of the Recôncavo.

Table 7, a breakdown of Table 6 by racial types, shows clearly the types selected in first place by the Negroes, the mulattoes, the whites, and the caboclos.

TABLE 7
BREAKDOWN OF TABLE 6 BY RACIAL TYPES

Question	Chosen in first place by:			
	Pretos(P)	Mulatos(M)	Brancos(B)	Caboclos(C)
Most attractive man	P	B	B	B
Most attractive woman	C&B	M	B	B
Most wealthy man	P	C	C	C
Most wealthy woman	B	B	B	B
Best worker (man)	P	C	P	P
Best worker (woman)	P	C	M	C
Most honest man	C	C	C	C
Most honest woman	C	C	C	C
Most religious man	C&M	C	C	C&B
Most religious woman	C	C	B	C

*Where two racial types are in first place it means they received an equal number of "votes."

Table 7 shows the extremely low position of the Negro woman in relation to the other women. She was chosen in the first

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place in only one instance--namely, as best worker--and only by the Negroes. In spite of the fact that in Table 6 the mulatto woman was considered the most attractive, she was chosen as such only by the mulattoes. The other three racial types selected the cabocla and the white woman. In summing up the total number of "votes," the mulatto woman won by the narrow margin of four. It is interesting to note that the Negroes chose the preto man as the wealthiest, selecting the caboclo in second place, while the other three racial types selected the caboclo first.

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Most people who desire to ascend socially will say that it is better to be white, or at least light, than dark, because it is the white who has the most money, the most education, and consequently the greatest number of opportunities. Traditionally the light-skinned mulatto has been able to share to some extent in these things. Therefore, today, if an individual is lighter it will be easier for him to climb, simply because of his lightness. Nevertheless, it is considered better to be a wealthy preto than a poor white.

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No one in any class likes a marriage in which the skin colors are too far apart. Any marriage of dark with light or white will be referred to as mosca no leite ("fly in the milk"), and a certain repugnance is felt by all. One man, formerly a fisherman but now a merchant of some means, is a preto married to a branca da terra who was poor but almost white. This marriage has not aided him much, as his wife did not bring him social position, but it has "lightened" his children. His own status is increased through his financial transactions. But his children are being educated in the city, and are more readily acceptable because of their color and their economic background. Their chances for a good marriage are greater than if they had the same background but were dark.

In another case, a white girl of the town's uppermost class is engaged to a preto who is an engineer in Salvador, but whose family has roots in Vila Recôncavo. There was great resistance to the engagement on the part of the girl's family, and all her friends felt that although she had a good "catch"--that is, a successful man--he was too dark for her, in spite of the fact that the girl's father is a branco da terra, and that her grandmother was dark-skinned.

The one impassable gap between the upper class of "aristocratic whites" and those below them is marriage. The white of the second class may be acceptable to the upper class be-

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563 cause he is white. But the chances are heavy against the marriage of a member of Class A with a "man of color." Perhaps in the city a marriage between a white of this upper class and a mestiço of the same group would take place, but this would certainly not happen in the rural area.

563 848 (551) Until the end of the last century a number of bastards were produced by the white plantation owners and their sons, with the slaves and former slaves. A large segment of the Vila Recôncavo population is made up of these individuals and their children, and in many cases they bear the name of the white's family. These people are not recognized socially by the whites. In many instances the mestiço has the family name not because he was given it, but because he took it. Frequently a white family will keep track of the descendants on the illegitimate side of the family, and help them if necessary; but they will never introduce one of these individuals as a member of the family, even when that person has all the family's physical characteristics, if he has a darker skin.

In one case, the illegitimate daughter of a union between a white man and a slave recently found herself in a position to help the legitimate daughter of her father's cousin. This girl was born free prior to abolition. The slave mother managed to educate the girl, who became a successful schoolteacher and made excellent professional connections in the world of education. Later on, when her father's cousin's legitimate daughter, widowed with three children, needed aid to educate one of her own daughters, she received such aid from her mestiço cousin.

563 Because it is so striking a feature of these color relations, it may be repeated that there is only one series in the classification and this includes everyone from white to black. Regardless of degree of color all types are part of the same broad three-class system. The categories are known to all people, not only to those who happen to be "people of color," and they are used by all in referring to others.

[Class A Families]

7. The Family

THE FAMILIES of Vila Recôncavo carry out the usual functions of this kinship unit to a greater or lesser degree, depending mainly upon their class and their internal structure. There are extremes of family structure in the area: Class A families represent a tightly built and extensive, extended, "patriarchal" organization, constantly giving evidence of its strong solidarity, while Class D is characterized by a loose and weak organization of small, immediate families and part families of women with their children. 565* 596

Class A in the community of Vila Recôncavo is represented by five family lines which own practically all the sugar lands in the area. Two of these families, the Condes and the Jacuipes, are closely interwoven by first-cousin marriages; a third, the Aliança family, is related to these two by marriage. The remaining two families are not related to those just mentioned nor to each other. There is little or no contact between them and the other families, for they spend little time in the rural area, and in Salvador they belong to circles composed of their own extended families. The Conde, Jacuipe, and Aliança families come into occasional contact with the other two at public functions in Salvador, but hardly ever at smaller social gatherings. They spend more time in the rural area, where they are more active politically than the other two. If the roots of these three families were traced back a century or so, it would be seen that they are also related to many other families of local planters and usineiros. Because of the tremendous growth of the numbers in each of the families, they have grown apart, each branch preserving its own nuclear group. Each generation brings new intermar- [423]

[Class A Families]

*565 596 riages and realignments between branches of these old families.

The Conde and Jacuipe families are good examples of family structure and cohesiveness in Class A. The Conde family is the principal owner of the factory, while several members of the Jacuipe family have stock in the corporation. The ancestral plantation of the Jacuipe family lies outside, although near, the community of Vila Recôncavo and is rented to a neighboring factory. Dona Sinhá, a member of the Jacuipe family and widow of a Conde, owns Fazenda das Moças within the community, a property adjoining the lands of Usina São Pedro. The Conde and Aliança families are joined by a marriage [423] which has brought them into close contact. The Aliança family has three plantations in the community. Thus ten of the eleven functioning plantations in the area belong to the members of three interrelated extended families.

The senior member of the Conde family, the "Colonel," is one of the two men who founded the factory and the brother of the senior member of the Jacuipe family, Dona Yayá, now a widow. A son and a daughter of the Colonel married a daughter and a son of Dona Yayá, thus strengthening the ties between the two families. The Condes are represented by three generations: the mother and father, their eleven children, ten of whom are married, and their twenty-three grandchildren. The Jacuipe family is represented by four generations: Dona Yayá, her eight children, seven of whom are married, twenty-six grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Through marriages in the second descending generation of both families, seventeen more persons have been brought into the family group, and through marriages of the third descendent Jacuipe generation six more people have been added. The total number of persons in the two immediate families is ninety-[162] seven. Nineteen members of the Jacuipe family now live in Rio de Janeiro, reducing the number constantly present in Bahia to seventy-eight. Those in Rio, however, maintain constant communication with Bahia and often spend their vaca-[528] tions "home" in Salvador.

The Colonel and his wife, and the Colonel's sister Dona Yayá, form the nucleus around which the two extended kin-[474] dred groups are organised. At the factory there are three residences: the large chalet, where the Colonel and his wife live, and a house apiece for his son and son-in-law, who are the two active directors of the factory. There are accommodations

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565* 596 in the three houses for nearly all members of the two extended families, for the factory has become the major gathering point for all of them during the summer. Each married couple maintains its own home in the city. In the Conde and Jacuipe families the tendency has been to enlarge the two families by the addition of in-laws rather than to lose sons and daughters, because of the exceptionally strong family loyalties held by the members. As a result, many more people are drawn into the social circles of the two groups, which at times appear as one family and at other times as two separate but close units.

565* 596 517 The social life of these people is carried out almost entirely within this group of ninety-seven persons, and their in-laws, plus the in-law families. Such intrafamilial social life is known as vida em familia. During the winter season in Salvador, their social activities are confined to visiting one another, playing cards with one another, having birthday parties for one another, attending the weddings of one another's children, and so forth. Trips to the beach and to social clubs and graduations are made jointly. During the summer, parts of families visit others, and at certain times, such as the botada da usina (first day of the sugar mill's activities each year), Carnaval, and the birthday of the Colonel, his wife, or Dona Yaya, nearly all the members of the family get together. This may mean a gathering of sixty to seventy persons. A "small" luncheon may be attended by a mere twenty or thirty persons.

565* 596 [593] [342] [561] [574] [572] It is still the custom for young married couples to dine with the parents of each at least once a week. It is also not unusual to find an entire apartment house in the city occupied by members of one family, each conjugal group occupying its own apartment. Members of the same generation usually play or visit together, although all generations are present at most family gatherings. Through lifelong companionship, members of families in this class come to know each other extremely well and are often the best of friends as well as relatives. Because of the size of these families, and because of the constancy of their devotion to one another, there is little time or energy left for entertaining outsiders. This, however, does not mean that acquaintances are limited to family members. Friends are made, who are drawn into the various conjugal groups and into the activities of the larger extended family.

565* 596 584 Courtship in Class A families is a formal affair. At first it is considered that the young couple are gostando (liking each other) or namorando (in love). It is expected that the boy

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596 will take the girl to his family gatherings and that he will be 584 invited to hers, so that their lives continue to be within the family, though now within two families. There are so few public places of entertainment in Salvador, other than the movies, that the couple is seldom alone. Dating nearly always takes place in family circles, so there is little need for a formal chaperone. Courtship continues until the boy has finished school (if it began that early, as it sometimes does), or is settled in business, at which time an engagement may be announced. Once the couple are engaged (noivos), they are allowed greater freedom; this does not, however, amount to much, as their social activities continue to be confined within the family. If for some reason the boy or the girl goes away for a time, the one left at home is invited to all family parties just as though both were there. The engagement period does not last very long--not as long as the gostando period, which may extend for two years--for once engaged, a couple is considered to be serious about marriage, which then takes place as soon as possible.

585 The wedding, always in Salvador, is both a religious and a *565 civil ceremony. The former is a formal, fashionable church ceremony followed by a reception and luncheon, before the 596 bride and groom leave for their honeymoon. The civil wedding takes place in the bride's home shortly before the religious [591] ceremony. Only the godparents and closest relatives attend this ceremony. After marriage the couple usually set up their own home, but if this is not possible they may live with one of their in-laws. This, however, is undesirable, and often the wedding is postponed until the couple can have their own home. The parents on both sides help toward this end as much as they can by getting the young man settled in a suit- * 565 able position. Family connections are extremely important 594 throughout Class A in placing young people in business or a profession.

163 As a rule a child is born to the young couple by the end of [608] the first year of marriage, and the compadres (godparents) are chosen from close members of the two families, at least [596] for the first child. Succeeding children may have close friends of the father as godparents. Children are named after family [553] members of preceding generations or--as has happened in [178] some cases--after a much-loved slave. The old pattern was for the couple to continue having children regularly as long as the wife was able to, but the trend is now for each generation

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to have fewer offspring. Four or five generations ago a couple 594
might have as many as twenty children. It was common among 163
these large families for at least one child to enter the priest- 178
hood or a convent. This is no longer the case, not only be-
cause of the smaller size of the families, but also because [463]
the colonial pattern of a priest for each plantation is now gone.

The marriage age for girls is also changing, for several 582
reasons: it takes longer for a boy now to be educated and set- 178
tled in business; the families can no longer support married
children; and girls are being better educated. Instead of be- 562
ing married at sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen, they now go 565*
to school much longer, sometimes taking advanced degrees
as do their brothers. This delays marriage till the twenties
and gives the girls a certain amount of independence, rather
than simply a position of wife and mother. As yet few of them [463]
have entered the professions, but recently it has become styl-
ish to study nursing or social work at least for a while before
marriage. The old pattern was for widows to be supported by [736]
their families, but now girls want to feel self-sufficient, with-
out the dreary prospect of living as dependents in the case of
their husbands' death. In this century, also, marriage has
assumed an aspect of companionship, which was formerly
lacking, for women have achieved a much greater equality with
their husbands and are now partners rather than household
fixtures.

There has been a reaction to the family aspect of Bahian 565*
society, and frequently people are heard complaining of the 596
narrowness of life in such surroundings and expressing a de- 178
sire to live in Rio de Janeiro, or some place where they would
not be always in the same restricted group of relatives. Many 574
of the former obligations of formal visits to close and distant
relatives are now relaxed, although telephone calls at least [206]
are expected with some sort of regularity and members of the
extended family, as well as their attendants, are still expect-
ed at all weddings, birthdays, and deaths. The arrival of fam-
ily members from Rio calls for many dinners and celebrations
in their honor. But the conjugal families seek outside ac- 571
quaintances more and more, and as they enter new groups they 565*
become less able to cope with the numerous family affairs. 596
Nevertheless, it is still membership in these extensive, pa- 178
triarchal families which gives people their status in the com-
munity as a whole and their right to enter new groups which [594]
form along class lines. Everyone is well aware of this, and [554]

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596 the first thing done on making new acquaintances is to inquire [178] into their family background and place them mentally on the appropriate social level.

[571] As a rule each extended family has a head, usually the oldest male. He is recognized by the rest of the family as the leader, and few things are done by them without his knowledge and advice. The head of the Jacuipe family is the eldest son of Dona Yayá. He has made his home in Rio de Janeiro and has not lived in Salvador for a long time. Nevertheless, he is informed of all that goes on within the family, and no serious step would be taken by any member without his counsel. On the local scene, however, it is his next younger sister who has taken the family lead in all social activities. It is she who sees to it that the family is represented at any function where it is a duty to appear. Among the Condes, the Colonel is still the family head in spite of his age and infirmity. For many years his eldest son showed himself capable of taking charge of the sugar mill and of the family fortunes as well, but since his untimely death none of the other sons has shown such vigor, and in the long run major decisions are left to the old gentleman.

[594] In the conjugal households, however, decisions and actions are made jointly by the married partners. Unless the action is a very serious one which might affect the rest of the family, they need by no means seek advice from the family head. The family leader has no strong control over the other members of the family; rather, he is someone to whom they can go if they need advice. Also, if any member of the family is in difficulties of any sort, the rest of the group rallies around him under the direction of such a person. Because of the many positions in public life occupied by members of these extended families, the family is able to muster considerable *pistolão* ("pull") in many fields. Requests are frequently made, especially to aid lower-class people who look to the various [557] family members as patrons. A call here or there by the recognized leader of a large extended family can be a great assistance in getting someone into the already crowded hospitals, in helping with a will which has become entangled in legal difficulties, in getting a young man into the Air Force, and in the myriad other things which arise in this very personalized culture.

[73] The cohesiveness of the extended family also acts to take [589] care of the aged, infirm, widowed, and unmarried. Not infre-

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[Class A Families]

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quently one girl in the family does not marry but remains home with her parents, taking care of them until they have passed away. Unless the father has made specific arrangements for her before his death, the family usually sees to it that she is cared for properly, since she has relieved them of the responsibility of taking care of their parents for many years. Or, if any member of the family lingers beyond what might be considered to be a normal life span, the other members help in some way so that person will be cared for. Thus no one is left out because of misfortune of any kind. Nevertheless, any individual member always tries not to become a burden on the family.

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Of the former patriarchalism of Class A families only vestiges remain, which however are still important: the continued close relationship of family members, even though separated by distance and interests; the intermarriage of cousins, and the strong pattern of life *em familia*; the fact that the family as a unit still provides care and protection for those members who are incapable of doing so themselves; and finally the acknowledgment of an extended-family head, a man accorded deference and respect by members of his own family as well as by other families. The upper-class family of today differs in significant ways from that of former centuries, especially in the increasing emphasis placed upon the conjugal family and the decrease in family size. A major departure from the old family traditions is the increasing equality of women, their increased participation both in home activities and in activities outside the home. [562]

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Birthdays are the most important occasions in these families aside from weddings. Whether in the city or on the plantation, birthdays are commemorated on a large scale by an *almoço* (luncheon). During the summer in the country the planters sometimes also have a series of luncheons, each Sunday on a different plantation. In such cases the house in which the luncheon is to be held provides the bulk of the food, but as a rule all the women make desserts which they bring with them.

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The menu, in accordance with old Bahian tradition, is huge, usually beginning with a *feijoada* (a deep dish of beans and meat, usually eaten with rice or farina), *sarapatel* (a highly seasoned dish of which the basis is pork blood), *moqueca de camarão* (a type of shrimp ragout made with *dendê* palm oil), and *ensopado de porco* (pork stew). These are followed by roasts of beef, pork, lamb, and turkey, and filet mignon.

[Class A Families]

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596 All these dishes are served with rice, potatoes, farina, and
527 cooked vegetable salads. Then fruits are served, followed by
a series of desserts including puddings, ice cream, and cakes.
262 The meal is concluded with a demitasse (*cafèzinho*). Lunch
[272] is usually served at midday, and afterwards the guests generally
break into small groups, talk, sleep, play cards, or
stroll about the garden. In midafternoon a small *merenda*
* (snack) is served for those who want it, consisting of cake and
565 demitasse, and in the evening *ceia* (supper) is served, including
cold cuts, salads, and dessert. After this the group
596 may go *en masse* to the movies, either at the Petroleum Camp
527 or in the town of Vila Recôncavo. Or, if in gay spirits, they
[546] may spend the evening dancing in the living room to popular
records. People go to these *almocos* by horseback, jeep,
[535] truck, or sometimes, in a spirit of fun, by oxcart. Hospitality
has for hundreds of years been the tradition of the rural
[492] landowners, who envelop guests with an overabundance of
[493] everything. One planter always has the dining-room table
set for at least ten people, although only he and his wife live
*565 in the house. Others have the reputation of always providing
a good meal for anyone who passes at mealtime.

574 The decreasing size of families, the shift in individual employment
from agriculture to the professions, and this century's
423 change to large-scale industrial holdings for the production
178 of sugar have caused some differences in land tenure
428 and, hence, inheritance. The Recôncavo is not an area in which land title was ever vague or lost as was often the case in the *sertão*. Land was always scarce here, for the desirable *massapê* soils are limited in extent. The plantations of today for the most part fall into one of two categories: those which have been in the hands of one family for a century or more, and those which were bought after the abolition of slavery by newcomers to the Recôncavo or by those who already had plantations and at a time of falling value bought new ones from the creditors who had taken them over from their former owners for debt. In both cases title passed free and clear. The common form of inheritance is for one half of the estate to go to the widow and the other half to be divided among other heirs.

178 A century ago, it was common for plantation masters to
42 have extensive holdings, not only in the Recôncavo, but also in other parts of the state, as well as houses and even commercial buildings in the city of Salvador. In addition to this,

[Class A Families]

[Class B Families]

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such families also usually had fairly extensive accumulations of silver service, china and crystal, and linens. It was the custom for such possessions to be distributed among the heirs as separate items. One son would receive a plantation in the Recôncavo, another a ranch in the sertão; a daughter might receive a full and valuable set of table service, or perhaps a whole house and its furnishings in Salvador. Single plantations were almost never divided, unless they were large enough to make such a division practicable. Property divisions were often made rather arbitrarily by the family patriarch, and were often bitterly disputed by the heirs after his death. Slaves were also part of the property divided, although it was not infrequent that certain favorite slaves were freed at such a time. In other cases, the favorite slave of a son or daughter would be willed to him by the father. Through inheritances and constant divisions, the former large holdings of these aristocratic families came to be well broken up.

Today in the event of a death in a family, there is often only one plantation in which the heirs may share. However, the plantation is rarely divided. In some cases where there is no strong emotional tie to the plantation, the heirs may sell it outright and share the proceeds. Another solution has been to rent the plantation to a factory and thereby delay the final solution. Still another has been for one of the heirs to take over the management of the plantation, paying a rental fee to the other heirs. A final solution is often reached by allowing one of the heirs to purchase the plantation from his coinheritors, and in this way the plantation and its traditions remain in the family, and are to some extent shared by all members of the extended family.

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The problem of land disposal exists only for the private plantation. In the case of factory lands, ownership is corporate. Death of the holder of shares in the corporation does not affect the land tenure, which goes on as before. His shares in the corporation are simply distributed among his heirs.

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The family pattern in Class B is quite different from that which has just been described. Although the conjugal family is equally small and shows the same trend toward diminution, there is never the extent or strength of the extended family which exists in Class A. In Vila Recôncavo, with only one exception, Class B families are only conjugal units without local tradition of generations in the area, for either they are couples who have recently come to the town in governmental

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[Class B Families]

* 565 capacities, or they are "newly arrived" socially, which often
594 indicates that the relatives of either or both spouses may belong
to the lower class; in this case the local upper-class families
are inclined to ignore them. In these conjugal families
the husband is the central figure, participating in business
and social activities of the town, while his wife and children,
[166] especially daughters, remain at home. The sons usually go to
the city to school and remain there after graduation, so there
[871] is little chance of continuing a strong family line in the town.
At the factory the case is somewhat different, for the sons of
Class B families may enter the factory in one of the higher
office positions, thus forming a larger family group as they
marry and settle down there. This pattern, however, is only
apparent in the second generation, and there are only three
* cases of it.

565 As a result of the lack of public entertainment in Vila Recôncavo
517 and the competitive attitude of members of Class B among
themselves and toward the higher members of Class C, there
[571] is little social gathering, especially for the women. There
are never extended family gatherings for Class B such as those
[596] described for Class A. The men go to the bar or visit one another's
[574] homes to some slight extent, but wives and daughters
seldom do. The wives are kept occupied bearing children and
[562] caring for them. Those few daughters who are sent to school
in the city are indeed fortunate, for their chances of marrying
[871] and remaining in Salvador, the desire of most young people,
are greatest. The summer vacation is boring to them in
[166] comparison with their scope of activities in the winter. The
[183] sons can enjoy the summer, going swimming, horseback riding,
playing ball, making the most of the few parties and festivals
[528] (festas) which take place during the summer, lounging
in the bar gossiping, meeting the boat, and visiting lower-class
*565 girls. The daughters, on the other hand, can do nothing
562 of the sort. They spend their time at home with their mothers
and sometimes visit a married girl friend or sister to
517 gossip.

For those girls who remain in the town, life can be intolerably dull. They must be extremely careful of where they go, when, and with whom, and of what they do, for the town gossip about them can be vicious. The reputation of a girl seen on the street at night without one of her parents is ruined. These girls are expected to be virgins, models of propriety,

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[Class B Families]

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and the social forces compelling them to conform to this ideal 517
are strong enough to keep them at home.

To some extent the Class B families take as their pattern 565*
the older traditions of the upper-class families. The father 562
is the most important person in the home and has the final
word in all decisions. His wife is not his equal in a social 594
sense and plays a much more passive role than the women 178
of classes A, C, and D. This, however, is slowly changing, [184]
for married couples of the younger generation are beginning
to share more activities, such as going to the movies, visiting
friends, or going on short trips to Salvador. But this is
a recent development and applies only to four couples in the
town. The others still maintain the old pattern whereby the
man attends social functions while his wife remains home.
On occasion of a farewell party, invitations were carefully
extended to the married couples in Class B at the author's
instigation. Of the thirteen couples invited, only four came
together. In the other cases only the husbands came. Among
the others, one of the husbands was away, and his wife would
not come to the party even though her mother, father, and two
sisters did. It is still common for the wife either to remain
discreetly silent or to disappear altogether when her husband
has visitors at home, and among the older families the father
and his guests are served separately at meals, the women
of the household eating afterwards alone.

Family life in rural Class B follows to some extent that of 369
the town family of the same class. The father is the central 565*
figure in the family and makes all decisions. He travels about 594
the community while his wife remains at home. The sons of
overseers, however, are seldom sent to Salvador to school, [871]
although the sons of Class B families living at the factory
usually are, at least for a short time. So far, however, none [166]
of them has entered a profession.

As has already been stated, the women of rural Class B lead 565*
much the same kind of life as the women in Class C, with 562
whom they associate. Daughters are guarded carefully, while
sons are placed in some advantageous position whenever pos- 184
sible, frequently through the aid of the plantation owner or 464
usineiro. They may enter the factory office, and in several
cases they have been set up in business on the plantations,
running small stores which belong to their fathers.

A daughter of Seu Paulo, the overseer of the Fazenda das 565*
Moças, married the son of the overseer on a neighboring 585
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[Class B Families]

[Class C Families]

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plantation during the author's stay in the community, and her father gave her a large wedding. The wedding party left the plantation early in the morning in an oxcart decorated with white crepe paper, and proceeded to the town of Vila Recôncavo. The wedding was held in the Franciscan chapel. The townspeople did not attend the wedding or show any interest in it. Immediately after the ceremony the wedding party started back to the plantation, a five-mile trip. As each plantation nucleus was passed the cart stopped in front of the overseer's house, and small glasses of rum were passed to the guests, and the happiness of bride and groom was toasted.

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[431]
[114]
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On arrival at the new brick house which the groom's father had presented to the couple, the bride went into the kitchen to help her mother and the other women who were preparing the luncheon. Then she passed small glasses of wine to the guests. With the exception of Dona Sinhá and the author, the guests were all overseers from the neighboring plantations. The female guests were relatives of the bride. The meal consisted of everything the region had to offer: fish, shrimp, salads; roasts of beef, pork, lamb, and turkey; potatoes and farina; followed by fruits, desserts, and coffee. After all the men had eaten and moved into the living room to chat, the bride and the other women sat down in the dining room to eat.

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In a sample of eighteen Class B households (eleven urban and seven rural), fifteen couples were married by both civil and religious ceremonies. The remaining three couples were simply living together, a state known in northern Brazil as amasiado. In Class C a sample of ninety-five households (forty-one urban and fifty-four rural) showed twenty-three couples in the amasiado state, twenty-two married by civil and religious ceremonies, thirty-four married in church only, and eight by civil marriage alone. Eight of the couples sampled did not answer the question. In Class B, one partner in each of the three couples living in the amasiado state was married to someone else whom he or she had left.

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Nineteen civil marriages were performed in the entire county (population over 11,000) during the year of 1950. They are shown below by age group. Fifty religious marriages were performed during the same year throughout the five parishes attended by the Franciscans. Because of differences in the manner of recording the two types of marriages, however, no correlation could be worked out as to how many marriages were both civil and religious. There are no statistics avail-

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able for the total number of marital unions formed during the years, so it is impossible to know the percentage of amasiado unions throughout the entire population.

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TABLE 8
CIVIL MARRIAGES BY AGE GROUPS

Males		Females	
minors under 18	1	minors under 15	2
18-22	4	15-19	6
23-27	6	20-24	7
28-32	5	25-29	2
33-37	1	30-34	1
38-43	2	35-39	1
	19		19

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There are occasions when a couple marry in the church only after having lived together for many years, at which time their children may be the principal witnesses at the wedding. Such a wedding always gives the couple a feeling of satisfaction and well-being, for there is sometimes a certain shame attached to the amasiado state, especially when it is necessary to fill in official forms such as birth registration, the census, or registration at the Institute of Vila Recôncavo. A woman who can say "meu esposo" or "meu marido" (my husband) feels a certain superiority over the one who can only say "meu homem" (my man).

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The attitude toward children in Class C is somewhat ambivalent. Married women with as many as ten or twelve children may say they never wanted children, but simply "took what God sent." Frequently little girls pray that their mother will have another child so they may take care of it. All girls from the age of seven to thirteen or fourteen seem to like small children. There are few men who do not want children. Even though the mother may say she did not want them, she always seems pleased with them after they are born, and children, especially boys, are well loved and spoiled. Part of the women's gossip is often about another woman who is about to have a baby, and many women with five or six children of their own accuse others of having children "como ratos" (like rats) because they have eight or nine. [521]

There is no use of contraceptives in Class C, although they

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are known to the majority. It was pointed out by the men with
a laugh that such things were unprocurable in town because
the institute drugstore is run by a friar. They are obtainable
in Centro and Salvador, but they are expensive, and the men
say they are embarrassed to ask for them. One young couple
sent to São Paulo for some injections to be given to the wife
to prevent conception, but they did no good. The couple had
found an announcement of the injections in a magazine, and
since they wanted to limit their family to the one child they
already had, they tried other means. They now have three
children in spite of their efforts at prevention.

847 There also are local remedies which are supposed to pro-
duce abortions. They consist of herbal teas and for the most
[278] part are supposed to be effective only up to the third month
of pregnancy. *Aluman*, *coqueiro* root, *orelha de pau*, *pitanga*,
mil homem root, and *melão de São Caetano* are all supposed
to be effective. Few women will admit to having used them,
although they all know about them. Figures on the number of
natural abortions are almost impossible to obtain, for most
often there is no record at all. The mother does not go to the
doctor; she simply buries *tal bobagem* (such nonsense) in the
843 back yard. Those who admit having had miscarriages say they
came about because of a fall, or frequently because of a great
fright such as seeing a snake on the road. Most women do not
841 keep track of their menstrual periods, and according to the
515 town doctor their personal hygiene leaves much to be desired.
864 Little or no information is directly passed between father and
sons or mother and daughters concerning sexual matters.
Each generation is left to find out for itself.

838 There are a few male sexual aberrants in town, known as
"*veados*" (literally, "deer," but slang for homosexuals), and
they are well known. A middle-aged fisherman, Patão, is the
center of such activities. He is married and has several chil-
dren. When his wife found out about his extramarital activ-
ities she took the children and left him, terribly shamed. This
happened several years ago, and since then this man has
worked up quite a trade, mostly among unmarried men, though
there are at least three married men who go to him also.
[548] Their excuse is that there are not enough women in the town,
and since there are no prostitutes they go to him, although
they do not like it. The married men say it is because their
wives are ill or away, and they do not want complications with
some girl. Patão, however, regales the daily gossip groups

[Class C Families]

Patão, however, regales the daily gossip groups 626
with his exploits, detail by detail, so it is always known who 838
has visited him. These men are in no way ostracised, and [521]
continue a normal life alongside the others. There are also
two cases of men connected with *candomblé* who are suspected
of homosexual tendencies, but there are no definite data
about them. Public opinion, nevertheless, is generally against
homosexuality, and there was one case in which action was
taken. A married man "*pegou um menino*" (caught a little boy)
in the men's bath at one of the wells. Ordinarily the men enter
the bath alone, the others waiting outside until the one inside
has finished. On this occasion the man found the boy already
there and entered with him. Later the boy told what had
happened and the neighborhood was incensed and compelled
the man to leave town at least temporarily. The boy's only
remark was that he had not been paid!

Boys in their late teens sometimes jokingly refer to the 838
clube de veados (homosexuals' club), intimating their exploratory
experiences with one another, and what they have
tried when they went together to Salvador or Centro, where,
according to them, the streets are full of *veados*. No such reports [839]
were found for the rural people, but the complaint that
young men were *viciados nas mulas* (corrupted by the use of
mules) was common. Another case at a distant factory concerned [522]
two women who were living together, one very strong,
large and bearded, and very jealous of anyone who even looked
at the other. This case was well known, and considered hilarious
by the neighbors.

Family life in Class C is characterized by a lack of privacy. 565*
The house of a family in this class has at the most two [362]
bedrooms, frequently only one, in which all members must
sleep. It is common for a young couple to have only one bed [352]
when their marriage begins, in which they, as well as their [513]
first and second children, sleep. The use of a cradle for infants
is rare. The baby usually sleeps with the parents, and
as it grows older, or as new babies are born, it is relegated
to the foot of the bed. Loud and bitter are the complaints about 565*
children who wet the bed, which many of them do for many 863
years. Most mothers say they try to wake up several times
during the night in order to hold the infant over the side of
the bed to allow it to perform its natural functions, which
makes life more pleasant for the others in the bed. In the [356]
morning the floor is thoroughly washed.

During the day young boys go about with only shorts on, or 600

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[Class C Families]

*565 During the day young boys go about with only shorts on, or
291 with both shirt and shorts, depending upon the weather. Girls
*565 always wear a dress. Children who are in the crawling stage
become extremely dirty because of the amount of dirt tracked
515 into the house from the streets, although this is now changing
854 as a result of paving. Babies, however, seem to have a propensity for getting into the charcoal sack, usually kept near the kitchen stove, and emerging well blackened. They are bathed twice daily, morning and afternoon, at first in cold water to accustom them to the cold water they will be using for
[853] the rest of their lives. Bathing the child is usually considered a pleasure for the mother as well as the baby, as is breast
*565 feeding. If the child of light-skinned parents exhibits the genipapo
143 (a bluish spot near the base of the spine, sometimes known as the "Mongolian blue spot") the mothers will take care
[826] not to let visitors see it, as the spot is thought to be a strong indication of the nearness of Negro ancestry. It disappears after the child is seven or eight months old.

*565 The men and older boys of Class C take their daily baths in
515 the afternoon, either at one of the two wells which are behind the convent and therefore out of sight of the town, or at wooden structures which have been built across the wells in the Cortume. They stand on a wooden floor and drop a small bucket on a string down into the water, which is hoisted up and poured over them, running back into the well with the soap suds and whatever grime has come off their skin. Frequently a woman when getting water will undress her son on the spot and pour buckets of water over him. This is not done after a boy has reached five years or six, however, and is never done to a girl of any age. The women and girls take a daily
*565 sponge bath in their kitchens late in the afternoon, before starting to fix the evening meal. None of the houses has toi-
514 let facilities other than a secluded place in the back yard.
[124] During a survey of housing facilities in the town, when the question was asked, "Do you have a toilet?" the answer was usually laughingly given, "What for?" (But practically every-
*565 one knows what a toilet is, and there are several different types in the town, belonging to upper-class houses. The con-
291 struction of a flush type, with an adequate cesspool, has been known for many years.) After the daily bath most people put
[515] on clean clothes in which they often sleep, although sleeping
[513] garments range from daytime clothing to long nightgowns, shorts, or nothing at all. Daytime clothing for the men consists of little more than trousers, shirt, and wooden shoes

[Class C Families]

565*
(*tamancos*), or perhaps leather shoes. Women wear a dress 291
and a slip and are usually barefoot. Dress-up occasions also [292]
call for undergarments, stockings, and shoes. Great modesty
is always shown about exposing oneself in front of others.
Few of the men shave themselves, going to the barber for 565*
this as well as for haircuts. There are several women who 305
are experts at hair straightening, which they do with a flat- 302
iron, although most women and girls in this class who have
the problem of straightening their hair know how to do it them-
selves.

In Class C as well as in Class B the father is the dominant 517
person. He rules the household. He is the one who is served 565*
at meals, whose clothing is always clean and pressed, and 592
who goes out the most. He spends much of his leisure time
in one of the several stores, talking and taking an occasional [184]
drink of rum; or on one of the few shaded corners playing
dominoes with his friends; or else in the bar playing billiards
and gossiping. As a rule he goes to the movies alone, or at
least without his family, although in the higher echelons of the
class families often go to the movies and to church together.
There is one family which is musically inclined, and which [533]
often spends evenings at home together, making up a small
orchestra. If there is a *samba* in someone's house, many men 565*
from this class will be there watching, while the participants 535
are usually single women and girls from the same class. The 517
men will discuss a woman's physical attributes while she is
in the center of the ring dancing. This is one of the most com-
mon ways in which a girl gets "looked over" and is watched as
she develops. Sooner or later some man will fall in love with
her (*apaixonar-se dela*), and if she is not well guarded by her
family he will eventually have an affair with her. In the case 565*
of fishermen, most of the time is taken up either by fishing or 226
by caring for equipment, for the nets need a good deal of at- 517
tention. Since the fishermen's hours follow the tides, their
working hours differ from day to day. They often go to bed [513]
early, in anticipation of getting up at three or four in the
morning.

The women, on the other hand, follow a more regular daily 565*
routine of getting the morning coffee ready, getting the chil- 512
dren off to school, going for water and wood, doing the ever-
present laundry and ironing, and caring for the younger chil- 462
dren. In addition, if possible, they prepare *xangô* to help sup-
plement the family income and go to the fair in Centro on Mon-

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Class C Families]

*565
512 days when their husbands cannot go. The wives of fishermen
462 also have to cook meals at different times in the day for their
husbands, who generally bring enough fish from the last catch
for one or two meals. It is the woman who goes to the store
for farina, coffee, beans, rice, and so on. Their evenings
are usually spent at home sewing, making or mending a net
either for their husbands or for someone else. If there is a
samba they may go and watch but seldom stay long, but if
there is a _candomblé_ ceremony they may spend the whole night
there, especially if they participate in it. In such a case they
often take their children with them and put them to sleep in
the house, or else put them on a bench to watch the proceedings.

759 The institute has broken down the pattern of the practical
743 midwife, known locally as _parteira_ or _curiosa_, since one of
178 the first things done when it opened in 1945 was to have several
young girls trained in Salvador as midwives. Up to that
time, however, there had only been older women, who through
experience and sometimes through necessity had taken on the
job of midwives. In the rural area the untrained midwife is
still important, for the clinic has not yet made itself felt to
846 the majority of people living there. When the time comes for
759 the birth of a child, a neighbor or perhaps a relative comes
into the house to cook and clean and look after the other children,
462 and occasionally to assist with the birth. The father
[844] continues his usual round of occupations, as most women put
it, "earning enough to feed another mouth." In some cases
the man helps with the housework when he is home, and there
are several men in the town who are good cooks and who can
look after the children. In other cases the midwife may stay
several days in the house, doing all these things. Recently,
however, as a result of the death of one midwife and the resignation
of two trained ones of the institute, the other two have
been so busy that they cannot spend much time in any one
house. A common complaint because of this is that the midwife
tries to hurry the birth, massaging the woman's abdomen, and
frequently attempting to induce birth before the normal time.

759 The most popular midwife in town rarely has a chance to
rest. She is in her seventies and is frequently in a state of
exhaustion from caring for households where a birth has taken
place. She sleeps there, usually on a grass mat since the
mother occupies the only bed. She serves in the rural area
also, as well as on the islands facing the town. Payment for

her services ranges anywhere from fifty *cruzeiros* to nothing 759
but thanks, but with the understanding that when she is ill
the family will help her, since she lives alone.

If a baptized child dies before it is seven years old, it is 761
called an angel and goes straight to heaven, while if it dies 851
before this age and is unbaptized, it is called a pagan and 775
goes to limbo. The angel is carried through the streets in an
open coffin, for everyone to see. The lid is put on the coffin
after it is in the ground, whereupon all those in attendance
scoop in some earth. The attitude toward the death of a child
is one of mixed joy and sadness, and sometimes of joy only.
If the mother and father wanted the child very badly, they feel
sad; but otherwise the general attitude is that the child is better
off dead, especially since he becomes an angel. The difference [533]
in the ringing of the church bells also shows this, for
the ringing for a dead child is a short, almost joyous sound,
while that for an adult is a long, sad tolling.

If it appears that a child is going to die after it has been 763
born, an effort is made to have it baptized as soon as possible.
But if it is healthy, it is baptized whenever the family can do 851
so. The baptism includes a small party for the family and godparents.
Formerly if a child died before it was baptized, its 769
grave was sometimes baptized on the eve of São João by the
woman who had been chosen to be its godmother. The family 851
and godparents would go to the cemetery at midnight and gather 178
around the grave, which the godmother sprinkled with water
and baptized. This, however, is no longer done.

According to the parish records, 705 children were baptized 851
in the county during 1950; 320 of those belonged to the community
of Vila Recôncavo. The civil register, however, showed 217
only 276 persons of all ages registered in the county for the 162
same year. A child is seldom registered right after birth,
or even at the time of baptism, but whenever the parents think
of it. Sometimes a person must do it himself when, as an adult,
he needs a registration certificate. The situation is changing [178]
gradually as life becomes more entangled in official red tape,
and people are registering their children more frequently than [565]*
they used to. Members of classes A and B are much more
careful about this matter than are the lower classes.

According to law, the medical doctor must sign a death 217
certificate before a permit to bury someone can be obtained, [763]
so the figures for deaths are more accurate than those for
births. The civil register for the community of Vila Recôncavo [759]
000

165 [217] The civil register for the community of Vila Recôncavo listed 111 deaths for 1950, fifty-one male and sixty female. The age breakdown was as follows:

TABLE 9
NUMBER OF DEATHS BY AGE GROUPS, 1950

under 1 year	36
1- 4	20
5- 9	1
10-14	4
15-19	4
20-29	10
30-39	10
40-49	6
50-59	9
60-69	4
70-79	3
80-89	1
90-99	2
over 99	1
	111

165 164 It is apparent that the first five years are those in which the death rate is highest. According to the local doctor's records, the most frequent causes of these deaths are diarrhea and enteritis (seven deaths), whooping cough (seven deaths), chronic nephritis (five deaths), and acute bronchitis (four deaths). The mal de sete dias (literally, "illness of seven days," an umbilical infection in newly born infants) was the cause of only two deaths, and only one natural abortion was registered, as well as one stillbirth. According to the same doctor, many more adults die of heart trouble and kidney ailments than of anything else.

553 [214] 551 553 The most popular method of naming children is by choosing from an almanac a name which strikes the fancy of the parents. In Brazil many commercial concerns publish yearly almanacs which are widely distributed. In addition to giving national holidays, saints' days, and various other kinds of calendars, they include lists of names, often of saints. While in the upper classes children are named after their parents and grandparents, lower-class families give their offspring all sorts of exotic names chosen from the almanacs, such as Estanislaus, Enoch, or Ignace. Sometimes the name is cho-

553
sen because it is the name of the saint on whose day the child 551
is born. There is also a good sprinkling of the more common
names such as Antonio, João, Lourdes, and Maria. But if a
child develops any peculiar characteristics, either physical
or personal, he or she will be called by some descriptive
term based on the peculiarity. Most people have nicknames 551
such as Patão (Big Duck), Barco Velho (Old Boat), Cuspe
Grosso (Thick Spit) or Gatinho (Little Cat), and in time their
own proper name is forgotten almost entirely and used only
for formal occasions such as signing records. The diminutive form of the given name is also popular, and is applied
even to upper-class people, for example, Dr. Zeca (diminutive for Dr. José). In some cases a man is even known by his
mother's or wife's name, for example, José de Ingracia.

In choosing godparents, there is great freedom. If possible, 608
at least one of the godparents will be a member of the upper [565]
class, a patron who will help the child if necessary, especially if the godson when he grows up wants to go to school in the
city or enter the army or navy. The other godparent may be
a member of the child's family, or in some cases the midwife. In many cases the wife chooses the female godparent,
especially if she suspects that her husband is paying too much
attention to some other woman. In such a case she asks that
woman to become the godmother; the latter can hardly refuse,
as it is always considered a compliment. By becoming the god- 608
mother the woman is put effectively out of reach of the hus- 835
band, as there can be no sexual relations between parents and
godparents. This is a common device of women who have an
unmarried sister living in the home, and it usually calls a
halt to any amorous intentions on the part of either the husband or the sister. There have been cases, however, where [626]
this rule was broken. Usually the couple who break this taboo are highly censured by the rest of the community, for the
wife, if she finds out, tells her friends about it. In one case [762]
which occurred in Vila Recôncavo during the author's stay,
the woman was so ashamed and frightened by the sin she had
committed that she killed herself by drinking rat poison.

In the rural area, while the man is usually acknowledged to 593
be the dominant person in the family, ~~it is~~ the woman who
dictates most of the daily actions. The children are with her 369
most of the time, helping in the house and working with her
in the garden, both girls and ~~boys.~~ When schools opened recently on several of the plantations, it was the mothers, not

593
369 the fathers, who insisted that the children go. In the case of
a woman who moves in with a new husband and brings her own
children, she always makes it clear that the children are hers
and not his. She will allow no interference from her husband
in the matter of disciplining her children. Often the best possible
relations exist between stepfather and children, but he
never gives orders to them. The rural mother in all cases
seems to be more exacting with her offspring than the town
[861] mother. It is not uncommon for a rural mother to beat her
children, even those who are grown men, with the cipó de caboclo
(a switch), whereas this would never happen in the town.
She also extends her control over them even after they are
married, counseling them and helping when she can, and criticizing
them severely if she does not like something they do.

883 By the time they are in their late teens, boys become interested
584 in courting (namoro), though girls often start earlier.
If a boy sees a girl who interests him, he manages to
212 meet her as often as possible on the street or at the dock, and
832 by looks and slight remarks makes it clear that he is interested.
Or, if he can write, he may send the girl a note through
[206] a common friend. In Vila Recôncavo the telephone office is
a popular place for making one's interests known, for the
telephone operator is a young woman who is highly respected
by most people in town and well liked by young people. A
note typical of those which may pass through her hands is as
follows:

> Vila Recôncavo
> January 7, 1951
>
> Dona Therezinha, Salutations:
>
> I am absolutely convinced that you do not doubt the sincerity of my love, which is always manifested so clearly in my letters and in my face when I see you.
>
> So, I equally have the conviction of having the strange happiness of possessing your love, but in the meantime there is something lacking to complete my felicity. That is to speak to you, to hear from your lips the sincere confession of your love, to feel you near me for a few minutes.
>
> I ask you to give me permission to speak to you, indicating the day, hour, and place in which we can meet.
>
> You will surely not repent giving me this pleasure, for you will see that I know how to retribute your confidence

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Class C Families]

883
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212
832

with respect and honesty. Anxiously awaiting your answer, I am your sincere admirer.

Excuse the mistakes. End.

Themistocles Filho

In this case it was the girl's first experience with this sort of thing, so she asked an older friend to write the answer for her. It took over a week before the answer was ready and was given to the boy. During this time the girls who know about the affair discussed the possibilities: the boy's looks, his note, his friends, and so on, until nothing was left uncovered. Generally the details of such an affair are shared by the girl with her female friends. The answer, when ready, ran as follows:

Vila Recôncavo
January 10, 1951

Dear Citizen:

Initially I send my wishes for happiness so that they may become part of all that is stored in your imagination, loyal and sincere friend.

And now I want to acknowledge receipt of your letter, which in its first moment was the source of indescribable joy in my heart. Afterwards, in the surprised reality of all young girls, I asked myself about the content of all that which you wrote to me so nicely. And, although bewildered by the disillusions of many of my girl friends, I think that my authorized answer may be a meeting between the two of us, so that we may know each other better, and if we understand each other well our destinies will belong to God.

And thus I present myself.

Therezinha

883
584

This affair went on for several more letters before the girl made a definite date. In the meantime the two passed each other in the street, in the movies, and on the dock without speaking. In the end the girl, who was only fourteen, lost her nerve, and the affair ended before any meeting took place. When such a correspondence culminates in an actual meeting, the meetings are facilitated or made difficult by the degree of vigilance exercised by the girl's parents. Often such an affair is hidden from them completely, only the girl's best friends having any

883
584 intimation of its course. The meeting may finally be arranged
at the house of an older female friend. If the two are genuinely
interested in each other they may allow the fact to become
[836] public, and if the parents are pleased they will in due course
be married. Otherwise the girl may keep the whole affair a
[263] secret, and after a period of flirtation have an affair with the
boy and become pregnant. Any girl who refuses to eat pepper
[843] is immediately suspected of pregnancy, and inquiries are
made.

*565 When a Class C family wishes to celebrate some occasion
such as a birthday, anniversary, or the time in which the twin
574 saints Cosme and Damião are feasted, the woman's friends
and any nearby female relatives come in to help her cook.
252 Guests are invited by the husband. The preparation of all
262 food must be done by hand, the chickens killed, cleaned, and
[476] plucked, the beans shelled, the shrimp and fish cleaned, the
farina cakes made, and the popular liqueurs (licores) prepared
[273] by soaking various kinds of fruit in bottles of rum and syrup.
At such parties the traditional, favorite Bahian dishes of vatapá, acarejé, carurú, abará, cuscus, and the many moquecas, are served. All these are appetizing, but take much time
[251] to prepare and cannot be made too far in advance, for there
*565 is no way of preserving food. Unless the household is particularly wealthy, the family seldom gives parties; many never
574 manage to give one. Dancing forms an important part of the
535 festivities. The men bring their drums, tambourines, and guitars, while the women sing and dance the samba. In the rural
[369] area, social dancing in mixed couples is rare, but in town it
is a common form.

*565 A family may take care of an aged mother, father, or even
godparent, or of some other relative on either side. Such a
888 person is well cared for within the family means. Most people
in Vila Recôncavo are generous toward others who are in some
736 way unfortunate, and help them if they can. There is little or no complaint if the household has to take in an infirm or aged relative; most people say that the same may happen to them one day and they will have to be taken care of. Perhaps the old person helped them in some way in the past when they needed aid and is now being repaid. Or if some older person wants to live alone, a group of neighbors and relatives all help in preparing meals and supplying food and other wants over an extended period of time. There is no case in Vila Recôncavo of an elderly person being sent to a public institution.

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Class C Families]

[Class D Families]

565*
736

Orphans, or children whose parents cannot care for them because of financial difficulties, are always taken in by some member of the family--an aunt, or uncle, or perhaps the grandparents if they are still alive, or the godparents.

592
565*
562
[162]

The Class D family presents a very different picture from that of any of the other social classes in Vila Recôncavo. It is almost the reverse of the patriarchal upper-class family, for in Class D the woman is the chief member, the *chefe de familia*. In Vila Recôncavo, 90 of the 290 households counted in the 1950 census reported a woman as the family head. Of these, thirty listed themselves as widows, seventeen as married but with husbands who lived elsewhere, and forty-three as unmarried. It is difficult to determine with certainty how many of the women who declared themselves widows or married actually were so. It is a favorite device of Vila Recôncavo women who have lived in an unmarried relationship with a man and subsequently separated from him to say that they are widows. It is equally difficult to determine from these figures how many unmarried relationships are involved.

565*
592
[583]
[162]

The composition of these households almost defies classification. Fifty-five are composed of mothers and children, with the addition in some cases of relatives and an *agregado* (official census term designating someone who lives in the house permanently but does not pay for his board), as well as *hospedes* (census designation of someone who is staying in the house temporarily and who is not paying for his board). Of the fifty-five houses with children, twenty-four are represented by unmarried, female family heads. Eight of these twenty-four households list *agregados* of approximately the same age as the woman, which may indicate, although not necessarily so, *amasiado* relationships. The other households are composed of what appear to be "left overs" from other families or marital unions: elderly people who have outlived their own conjugal units, younger people whose families either never existed as legal units or have been dissolved, *agregados*, and *hospedes*. These ninety households include a total of 353 people, who can be classified as follows:

55 mothers
142 children
37 grandchildren
35 relatives, including mothers,
aunts, cousins, sisters, brothers,

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Class D Families]

*565
592
[162]

nieces, and nephews
46 *agregados* and *hospedes*

Examples of the household units are given below.

*565
592
162
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TABLE 10
COMPOSITION OF CLASS D HOUSEHOLDS

Status of Head of Family	Age	Occupation	Number of Head of Family's Children Living in House	Number of Others in House
unmarried	62	none	2	4 grandchildren
widow	70	cook	1	1 grandchild; 1 *hospede*
unmarried	59	laundress	1	4 grandchildren
unmarried	24	laundress	4	none
widow	49	seamstress	4	7 grandchildren, 1 *agregado*
unmarried	42	cook	3	1 sister, 1 niece, 1 *hospede*
unmarried	39	laundress	3	1 *hospede*
unmarried	66	ironing	0	6 nieces & nephews
widow	42	ironing	6	none
unmarried	56	laundress	0	1 grandchild
unmarried	36	laundress	6	1 nephew
unmarried	48	laundress	3	1 brother
married	36	ironing	6	1 mother, 1 nephew
unmarried	38	laundress	3	1 aunt, 1 cousin
unmarried	84	none	0	1 *agregado*
unmarried	21	ironing	1	none
unmarried	54	laundress	0	1 *hospede*, 2 *agregados*
married	52	laundress	1	3 grandchildren

*
565
592
583
836
159
848

The household of Damiana is a good example for Class D. Damiana, who is now in her fifties, had a prolonged affair with a married man when she was young, and gave birth to three daughters. Orphaned herself at about the same time, she took her children and went to reside in the house of a good friend who was living in an unmarried relationship with a man. When Maria José, one of her daughters, was sixteen she was deflowered, and Damiana managed through a godfather's influence to force the boy who was responsible to marry the girl. Maria José, however, did not want to live with him, and since

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Class D Families]

565*
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583
836
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848
[608]

no child was born of the affair she went to Salvador where she found employment. There she met Vavá, whom she liked very much. She went to live with him for eleven years and had three children.

During this time, Vavá had affairs with several other women and had two other children. Finally he tired of Maria José and told her to go home to her mother, which she did, taking her three children with her. Damiana's godfather allowed her, Maria José and her children, and Tatá, another of Damiana's daughters who by then had six illegitimate children, to live rent-free in a house he owned. Childless, he took one daughter from each of the two girls to bring up in his own home.

Shortly after the three women had set up this household, Vavá tired of his new companion and wanted Maria José to come back to him, which she refused to do. From time to time he also asked her for money, as he was now unemployed. She always gave him some, since she was employed, explaining that it was not for him but for his two other children, for she could not think of their going hungry.

565*
848
[551]
[583]

In almost every case of break-up of the unmarried state, the children remain with the mother. This is also true in the case of an affair which results in a child. The father never takes on the responsibility of the children. In addition to this, as stated earlier, the children bear the mother's name and not that of the father. Often a break-up occurs because the man goes to live with another woman who does not want the children of his previous union, as she may have some of her own either by him or by someone else. On the other hand, women in Vila Recôncavo say that they would be ashamed to let the children go and be brought up by another woman, except in the case of a godparent, in whose home the treatment is expected to be at least as good as that which the mother could have given the child.

565*
837

Sometimes women in this class have affairs with men who are already married and who do not leave their wives and children. A woman seldom has more than one lover at one time, and usually stays with the same man for a long period. Although the man takes no responsibility for the resulting children, he may, nevertheless, try to help the woman sometimes; but his first allegiance is to his own wife and children.

565*
592
848

Unless there has been a formal marriage, the children are always considered as belonging to the mother, and the most

[Class D Families]

*565

592 remarkable fact about these female households is that mother and children manage to remain together as long as they do.
848 Usually the husbandless woman finds work as a laundress or at ironing, or dries fish (xangó), three tasks which permit her to keep her children near her. When she becomes a cook or servant in someone's home, it is common for her to take the children to work and let them play nearby in the back yard. In such a case her children may eventually receive aid from her employer, who because of the children's continued presence in the house becomes fond of them and wants to do something for them. If this does not happen, the mother herself
[464] must take care of their future. As a rule, boys from such families leave town as soon as they are old enough, finding employment in Salvador. Girls, on the other hand, remain with their mothers more often than leaving. If they do leave, they often return, like Maria José, with children of their own.

*

565 Because of the poverty of these households, there is little
592 or no provision for the care of older people, and it is from this class that come the very few, poor, old women who beg
735 for food, medicine, and other aid. The people of the town are
888 in general extremely generous in view of their own financial circumstances, and they do what they can to help. In Vila Recôncavo there are no "professional" beggars; there is no one
[157] seated on a street corner asking for alms. There is, instead, a very proud spirit of independence, and having to go from door to door (or, rather, from kitchen to kitchen) asking for food or money is highly repugnant. Families will often send food to an old person regularly in order to avoid face-to-face contact with begging. Begging is also sometimes done through a third person, often a child, again to avoid face-to-face relationships in asking for aid.

*

565 Class D does not exist in the rural area, for reasons already noted,
369 particularly the pressure brought to bear by plantation owners and administrators. In addition, however, it also seems that women can only support themselves and their children in the more crowded urban areas, where they can find work which allows them to be near their children.

[P 155]

VILA RECÔNCAVO

793
794
301
142
291

An old cult priestess

291
305
516

The "beauty parlor," Vila Recôncavo

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346
771
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8. Religion

[249] DURING COLONIAL and empire times, religion occupied a
large part of the lives of the landed aristocracy. The town of
Vila Recôncavo had a Franciscan convent, a large mother
church of the parish of São Gonçalo, and the chapel of the
[193] Third Order of Franciscans. In the rural area of the com-
munity nearly every plantation had its own chapel, which
formed part of the owner's house, and its own chaplain to care
for the spiritual needs of the landowning families and their
[794] slaves. Much of the wealth of landowners was used to build
magnificent churches, to sponsor religious processions, and
to maintain religious brotherhoods for laymen.

178 In this century, however, Catholicism is no longer the of-
79 ficial state religion, the landowners no longer support the
town church as they used to, and the Third Order of Francis-
+[565] cans has died out in Vila Recôncavo. Today members of the
upper class (Class A) confine their support to the churches
they attend in Salvador, leaving the local church to the mercy
of God and to the gente pequena of the town. Visits from the
Franciscans to celebrate Mass and give instruction for first
communion have taken the place of the plantation chaplain and
chapel. The priests today say that the people of the community have no intellectual basis for understanding religious teachings or beliefs. Consequently, they say that they now seek only to have as many as possible conform to the outer forms and rituals of the church and refrain from attending the African cults.

175 In addition to the formal structure of the Catholic Church
there arose, especially in the nineteenth century, many houses
794 of African cultism, called in this region candomblé. The ad-

175
herents of these cults, female slaves and former slaves for 794
the most part, followed a lengthy routine to become practitioners
in the various cult houses and spent large sums of money,
according to legend, on the required bracelets, necklaces, and
clothing.

Today, however, the cult priests and priestesses have the 794
same complaint as the Catholic priests. They say that young 793
people no longer have the understanding or the patience necessary
to prepare for devotion in the cult houses. The older [177]
priestesses deplore the degeneration of some of these houses
and the admission of Indian spirits, which are now displacing [776]
the African gods.

Spiritualism has recently entered the community. So far it has been limited to few people in the community, although it is very popular in Salvador.

The use of the supernatural as described in Willems' *Cunha*[1] 771
does not take place in Vila Recôncavo. In Cunha the saints 776
are asked to send rain whenever it appears that the crops are
in danger. But in Vila Recôncavo, which lies in a semitropical [171]
rain area, there is no need for such invocations. Besides, [782]
these are large-scale economic crops, not subsistence produce
on which the people depend directly for their living. [433]

The Catholic Church in Vila Recôncavo

During the colonial period each religious parish was care- 795
fully delineated and conserved, but later political divisions 794
cut across parish lines. This has made the use of colonial
statistics very difficult. During colonial and empire times the 632
church was the main census organ, but since parishes and 175
counties do not coincide in their outlines the statistics are little
help today in comparing the present with the past. Each [114]
parish built a mother church (*matriz*) in the parish town. Each
of these churches had a patron saint, who was also the patron [776]
of the parish, and a resident priest or priests.

In the town of Vila Recôncavo, the county seat, a mother 175
church was built, with São Gonçalo as its patron saint; also 79
constructed was the Franciscan convent, connected with an
opulent Third Order. As the Recôncavo entered its long per- [776]

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[1] Emilio Willems, *Cunha: Tradição e transição en uma cultura rural do Brasil* (Sao Paulo, 1947), Chapter 7.

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79 iod of decline, the parishes suffered financially; the buildings fell into a state of disrepair, and the parish priests were no longer replaced, for there was no money to support them. The Franciscans in town also suffered materially, and their personnel greatly diminished. About the time the empire ended and the republic began, the flow of young men and women into the religious orders ceased. At the end of the nineteenth century there were no longer enough Brazilian Franciscans to carry on the work in the convent, and a contingent of German Franciscans was sent to Brazil. Since that time, the Franciscans in Vila Recôncavo have been of German birth. Today there are only four Friars in Vila Recôncavo, three ordained priests and one lay brother.

One by one the county parishes were turned over to the
Franciscans as the parishes became too poor to support their
own priests, until today the three ordained Franciscans must
79 care for the spiritual needs of five parishes. These include,
in addition to the convent itself and the five parish churches,
thirty smaller churches and chapels, all of which serve a population of over fifteen thousand people scattered over a wide
area accessible only by canoe, foot, and horseback. Of these many churches, the only one which has a daily Mass is the Franciscan convent in the town of Vila Recôncavo, for there is always a priest there while the other two are traveling. On Sundays three Masses are celebrated in town: one in the convent, one in the mother church, and one in the small chapel in the lower part of town, commonly known as the fishermen's chapel. Only one town in all five parishes has a scheduled monthly Mass. This special effort is being made because, in the words of the priest, "There is a large religious movement there." In general it is understood between the parish people and the priests that when a town or smaller settlement wants a Mass celebrated the people fix a date for it and notify the convent. If possible, a priest fulfills the engagement, carrying his own robes, Book, Host, and chalices with him.

In addition to saying Mass, the priests are called upon to
bless new houses, to give last rites to the sick, to take communion to the aged and infirm at home, and to teach the young
(871) children their catechism. Catechism is taught in the schools,
and once a week the priest journeys to each school to teach.
Near the end of the school year, First Communion is celebrated in the school or, if on a plantation, in the owner's house. The young children receive Communion first, and af-

ter them any others who want to receive it. Through the year 79 few people from the rural area go to hear Mass in town, unless they have asked for a special service in honor of their patron saint or in the memory of a dead relative. They usually wait for the priest's visit to their own locality. The same is true of weddings and baptisms, which are often held up pending the arrival of the priest.

In case of death, the corpse is buried within twenty-four 79 hours. Each parish has its own cemetery, and the relatives 764 and friends of the dead carry the coffin there for burial. In the parish of Vila Recôncavo, the cemetery lies just outside the town. People from this parish, as well as those from the town itself, take the coffin to the convent before burial to be blessed, for there is always a priest there. Then they carry the coffin to the cemetery. In the other parishes the dead are buried without the benefit of a blessing, which will however take place on the second of November, when priests try to visit each cemetery and bless all the dead.

The many duties which have fallen upon the Franciscans have 792 made it almost impossible for them to continue the type of life prescribed for those who enter an order. It is very difficult for them to attend the retreats to which they should go; there is little or no time for them to study or contemplate, or to teach, for they have been faced with the discouraging reality of trying to keep religion alive in a population too large and scattered for proper contact to be maintained. In 1941 Vila 794 Recôncavo was described by the provincial canonical visitors as "one of the greatest crosses of our Province, because of the 795 five decadent parishes entrusted to it."[2] The same book speaks constantly of the "deplorable indifference" and "religious coldness" of the people of Vila Recôncavo. In 1949 the statistics [162] of religious activities were as follows: 333 baptisms (184 legitimate and 149 illegitimate children), 27 weddings, 200 First Communions, 8,292 general Communions, and 80 Communions for sick people.

As of today there are no religious brotherhoods in Vila Re- 792 côncavo. The last to pass out of existence was the Brotherhood of the Most Sacred Sacrament, which was closed upon the death of its treasurer early in this century. The Third Order of Franciscans, formally closed in 1902, was reopened in

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[2] Livro de cronica do convento, Vila Recôncavo (MS in Franciscan Convent, Vila Recôncavo).

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1933 when two women took the scapular and cord. But nothing
794 more came of it. There is a benevolent organization, the Society
747 of St. Vincent de Paul, which gives aid to the poor and
is run by three men of Class B. It is very weak, however, and
at present can help only four persons in the town. The society
conducts no festivals or public displays.

Festivals

796 The festivals which take place in Vila Recôncavo are based
[184] on the religious calendar and are participated in to a great
extent by the African cult members. January 1 is an important
[793] date in town and is celebrated by a Mass in the fishermen's
chapel, after which the priest goes out on the beach and
blesses all the canoes. After he has gone, the participants in
796 African cults make their offering for the day. This is the date
794 when presents are given to the Mother of Waters (Mae d'Agua
locally, but sometimes known as Janaina, Sereia, or Yansan
782 in other parts of Brazil). The presentations are made by the
776 cult priestesses, but anyone who wants to give a present to the
Mother of Waters may do so by handing the gift to the cult
[822] priestess beforehand. The presents may consist of money or
of anything a woman can use, as long as it is white: combs,
ribbons, powders, perfumes, soaps, flowers, and so on.
Everything is wrapped together and placed in a large clay basin
covered with white cloths and decked with white flowers.

The cult priestess comes out of the cult house after Mass and, accompanied by participants and onlookers, goes down to the beach and enters one of the large canoes prepared for the occasion. The cult drummers accompany her, as well as most of the female devotees (filhas de santo). Usually two presents are given, one to the young Mother of Waters, who lives near the town, and another, larger one to the old Mother of Waters, who lives at about an hour's distance from town, where the water is very deep. The canoes take off and proceed up the river, while the drums beat and the devotees sing. The Mother of Waters is called and praised, and when the canoes arrive where the younger one lives, her present is lowered into the water. If it does not sink it is a very bad sign, for it means that the present was rejected. The bundles usually sink, however, for they are bound in a heavy clay basin.
[787] At this moment the Mother of Waters is supposed to enter the
body of the person who placed the gift in the water. This person,
usually an older devotee, enters a trance state and must

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be held in the canoe by the others, for she tries to jump into 794 the water. At the same time, all those present in the canoe 782 scoop up the water and pour it over themselves, for it is at 776 this moment quite holy. The possessed person is gradually [787] calmed and brought back to a normal state as the canoes move up the river.

During this time, groups of fishermen often go out in their [788] newly blessed canoes (canoas de bordejo) to play. Because their canoes have been blessed by the priest, and because of [823] the holy aspect of the water resulting from the presence of the Mother of the Waters, the men may enter the water without [526] fear, so they jump in and out of the water and swim around their canoes until they are tired. This cannot be done at any other time of the year for it is not considered safe to enter deep water.

After the second gift has been offered and accepted, the party lands and goes back to town on foot in a spirit of great joy and gaiety. The rest of the day is given over to horse racing, 796 visiting, gaming, and dancing on the fishermen's square. People from classes A and B do not participate in these proceed- 794 ings, which they consider barbarous. But most lower-class 565* people at least watch, although only participants enter the canoes. Observers walk along the banks and watch. Cults from [527] the rural areas make their own presentations separately, [389] frequently on Christmas Day and in another locale.

The next festival in the year comes after January 6, the 796 Day of Kings, which has already been mentioned. Parties take place from this day until the beginning of Lent. Other than a Mass, there is no longer much sanctity connected to this day.

The most important festival of the year is that of Nossa Senhora da Conceição da Praia, the patron saint of most of the [776] fishermen, to whom their chapel is dedicated. This festival begins on January 13 and starts off each evening with a novena held in the fishermen's chapel. The priest goes each evening for the novena, and, on the three last days of the festival, each morning, to celebrate Mass in honor of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, St. Peter, and St. John. A committee is organized in the chapel to ask patrons for contributions to the 796 festival, for candles, oils, electric light, and to pay the priest 794 each night. Flowers are a very important part of the festival, although at this time of the year they are very expensive. Each night of the novena there is a different group of patrons, and

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*794 [565] supposedly there is competition among them as to which night will be the loveliest. This becomes more expensive each year, however, and the patrons are becoming less willing to donate money. This festival is most enjoyed by the lower classes. It is avoided by members of Class B, who in many instances are nevertheless called upon to be patrons.

796 [525] [275] The festival takes on a carnival aspect each night, with booths set up in the streets by professional people from Salvador and Centro. The booths have wheels of fortune and guessing games, and sell sweets and drinks. After the religious celebration in the chapel, everyone goes out into the square to talk, play games, and dance.

796 794 358 [291] [535] *[565] The day before the first Mass of the festival is celebrated, the chapel is thoroughly washed by the women participants of the African cult house, who dress up in their many starched skirts and bandanas and go to the well as a group for water, which they take to the chapel to throw on the floor. A few little barefoot girls wash down the floor with brooms. After the washing the women go out dancing in the streets. They dance on every street in town and ask for alms. This entire procedure, known as the lavagem (washing), is much frowned upon by members of Class B.

796 Most of the ordinary town life ceases during these nine days, for everyone is tired after staying up so late at night. The day of the patron saint of the town falls during this festival, and is passed over with nothing more than a simple Mass celebrated in the mother church in his honor. The people of the rural area of this parish do not observe the day of the patron saint [794] at all. The day after the nine-day festival, a group of young men go out dancing and singing in the streets, asking for alms to make a large feijoada (feast of beans) at night. This is called mazorra (the clowns). After this the men settle down again to their fishing, for by now their money is all used up.

[778] The next festival on the calendar is the second of February, when the nearby towns of Centro, Conselho, and Morro celebrate the day of their patron saint. People from Vila Recôncavo go to one or another of these three towns, although not in great numbers. The majority go to Conselho, which has the reputation of being a holy place, and to which pilgrimages are frequently made.

*[565] [184] All festivities end during Lent, which is quietly observed. It is interesting to note that Carnaval, which takes place the three days before Lent, is observed in Vila Recôncavo only among members of Class A.

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among members of Class A. In the cult houses it is said that 796
the African gods go back to Africa for Lent and that the Indian spirits go back to the forests, not coming back again to [794]
Vila Recôncavo until Easter Eve. Good Friday is usually
marked by the eating of foods with much palm and olive oil, [776]
mostly the favorite Bahian dishes of *acarajé* and *vatapá*. On
Saturday some people in the town "burn Judas." They make [262]
a figure stuffed with straw or grass and in the evening parade
it through the whole town on a donkey until they arrive at the
fishermen's chapel, where the dummy is strung up and burned.
While it burns the man who made it reads a long poem which [538]
he has composed during the year and which tells about his
friends and their individual peculiarities.

During the month of May a service is held each night in the [793]
mother church in honor of the Virgin Mary. A priest officiates, and the women of the upper class sing in the choir. This [794]
ceremony is attended almost entirely by townspeople, mostly
women. St. John's Day, which comes at the end of June and is [569]
a popular holiday throughout most of Brazil, goes unnoticed
in the town, although at dawn on that day there may be a reveille for St. John (*alvorada de São João*), which consists of
shouting, "Wake up, St. John!" The sixteenth of August is (369)
celebrated, mostly by the rural people, as the day of St. Roch,
who is considered a foe of pestilence. There is usually a
Mass in the mother church on this day, after which the priest
conducts Mass in as many of the rural chapels as he can. St. [794]
Roch is also celebrated by the African cults. [184]

On September 27, the twin saints Cosme and Damião are
celebrated, often with a Mass, but especially with a party
called the *carurú*, the dish distinctive of this day and the
days which follow it; for, as with the Day of Kings, Cosme and Damião may be feted any day within a month or so
following the proper date. Before a *carurú*, it is customary [794]
for small images of the two saints to be carried about the
streets from house to house asking for alms for a party in
their honor. Usually the party is for the children, who dance
and eat as much as they can, while the older people at first
look on, and then finish up the food that was left and also
dance. Anyone who is a twin or who likes twins may give a
carurú in his house.

St. Francis is also feted, since there is a Franciscan convent in the town, by a devotion on three nights and a Mass on
the morning of St. Francis' day. The last Sunday in October,

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the day of Christ the King, there is always a procession in
town which starts from the mother church and goes to a small
altar set up in front of the County Hall, then to the fishermen's
[778] chapel, to a cross which stands in one of the squares, and
back to the convent and church. A few people set their small
[788] household oratories in the street in front of their houses to be
*[565] blessed by the priest as he passes. This procession is accom-
panied mostly by women of all classes, although the canopy
[184] over the Host is carried by men from Class B. Christmas is
[431] observed quietly except for the exchange of gifts.

Prayers

794 Prayers are very popular throughout the year among the
782 women of classes C and D. For a variety of reasons a group
of women will get together in the house of one of them and pray
*[565] aloud, standing before the little decorated niche which con-
[184] tains a picture or figure of the household saint. The one who
knows the prayer best leads the others. A group may pray on
the evening before the day of the patron saint of one of them,
especially if they have been unable to have a Mass said be-
cause of the lack of money or a previous commitment of the
priest. At times they pray because someone has promised his
patron saint that he would do so if he were cured of an illness.

782 Strangely, perhaps, the fishermen never seem to feel a need
for supernatural help to overcome bad weather or lack of fish.
A few of them, however, give a present to the Mother of the
Waters in thanks for an exceptionally fine catch. At other
times, people simply pray to their patron saints if they cannot
[776] have a party in their honor. Personal patron saints, however,
do not play a very important part in the lives of the people of
Vila Recôncavo, although nearly everyone has one and has at
[794] least a picture of the saint on the wall. It is common to find
women who belong to an African cult group praying at these
nightly gatherings in honor of the various saints who may or
may not be represented in their cult houses.

755 Exceptional fatigue, light illness, and pains may all be
782 caused by the evil eye, and are removed by having a woman
pray over the victim. There are several women in town who
[754] can make such prayers particularly well; however, they do
not pray as a group. A woman goes to the house of the vic-
tim and, with a piece of thread in her hand which she passes
over the body of the victim, says the Lord's Prayer and the

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782 Hail Mary. Some women say this process must be repeated three times in a row, others that it must be done each Friday for three weeks. This is a protective prayer "to take away the evil eye" (para tirar mau olhado). The thread which is used is taken away and carefully disposed of, by the person who prayed.

Conflict and Differential Participation

79 The attitude of the priests toward conditions in their parishes is one of resignation. They realize that it is physically impossible for them to take religion to all the people or even to the majority of them. Also, they are disheartened by the poor intellectual basis the people have for understanding the doctrine of the church. They do not discourage the group prayers, nor do they encourage them; they simply let them exist. But they vigorously combat African cultism. For several years the fishermen's chapel was closed because of the cult activities of so many of the women who attended the chapel. Recently, however, the Franciscan superior reopened the chapel, feeling that it was better not to exclude the entire fisherman population from the church because a few of them also participated in African cults. For it had turned out that when the chapel was closed all the people in the lower part of town refused to go up the hill to the convent and therefore passed several years without attending Mass, confessing, or taking Communion. In sermons given during Mass an opportunity to condemn cultism is never lost, even though it may have little effect. The local church policy toward cultism depends upon the feelings of each new superior and whether he will tolerate it. The priest who reopened the chapel became a much-loved person in the town, at least by the lower classes, for he realized how few people in the total population indulge in cult activities compared to the many who go to watch. The caretaker of one of the rural chapels is also a cult leader on his plantation, but relations between him and the priests are cordial. Although most of the female devotees attend the Masses for their particular saints, the priestess of the cult house never goes to church and avoids meeting the priests if possible.

794 Religion is more a part of the women's lives than of the men's, and there are more women than men at every Mass. There are a few strongly religious women (beatas) in the town

794 who never miss a Mass, benediction, or prayer. By means of
a questionnaire in the town and the rural area, the following
125 data were obtained concerning the average frequency of church
794 attendance per year for men and women over fourteen years
*565 of age:
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TABLE 11
FREQUENCY OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Urban		Class	Rural	
Number of times per year			Number of times per year	
Males	Females		Males	Females
		A	19	23
40	96	B	4	3
17	25	C	3	3
4	41	D		

369 Several things are shown by this table. First, the higher a
794 man's social position, the more often he goes to church, at
*565 least in classes B, C, and D. Second, the frequency of atten-
dance by the women of all classes is considerably greater than
[554] that of the men. Third, the women of Class A attend church fewer times per year than do the women of classes B, C, and D of the urban area. Fourth, there are great differences in the rural and urban attendance: people from the plantations seldom go to town for Mass, preferring to wait for some special plantation occasion when the priest will go to the plantation. The difference between the attendance frequencies of Class A and Classes B and C of the rural zone is due to the time that Class A spends in Salvador, where members often attend Sunday Mass, as well as family Masses.

African Cults

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777 Brazilian candomblé is usually thought of as a syncretism
776 between African cultism and Catholicism. There has been a partial identification of the African deities with Catholic saints. For example, Ôgún, the African god of war, has been identified with St. Anthony; Ôxóssi, deity of the hunt, with St. George; Ômolú, the god of pestilence, with St. Roch; Êxu, the trickster, with Satan; Yansan, with St. Barbara; and Xangô, with either St. Jerome or St. Barbara. There has been

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794 [776] [177] [114] some confusion in the minds of the cultists themselves as to exactly which saint an African spirit represents, and there often are slight differences in interpretation which do not, however, upset the cult practices to any great extent. Cultism in Brazil has been described in detail by Nina Rodrigues,[3] Arthur Ramos,[4] and Edison Carneiro,[5] and by the Americans Donald Pierson[6] and Ruth Landes,[7] all of whom concentrated on cultism in the city of Salvador; Eduardo Octavio da Costa[8] has good material on urban-rural cultism in Maranhão (northern Brazil). [177] In Vila Recôncavo the syncretisms are being forgotten as the content of cults changes from African spirits to the Indian spirits, for which no identification is made with the Catholic saints.

794 174 Cultism apparently got its start in Bahia in the early nineteenth century. Carneiro[9] sets the date for the establishment of the first cult house in the city as 1838. Old people in Vila Recôncavo do not remember cultism beyond two generations ago. There is one woman in town who is in her late nineties and who only remembers hearing of her mother and her mother's generation as active in cults. Apparently the force of cultism increased with the decrease in Catholic proselytization, as the number of priests in the rural areas diminished. It also increased in tempo with the manumission of slaves, and apparently was one of the institutions through which former slaves bought the freedom of other slaves.

794 369 178 [177] Today the cults of the rural area are far less elaborate than those in the city of Salvador, although it seems that even in the city, cultism is showing the same general trend toward disintegration which is so strongly apparent in the rural area. In both places there is a shift away from African ritual to practices connected with the Indian spirits, whose demands

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[3] Raymundo Nina Rodrigues, O animismo fetichista dos negros bahianos (Rio de Janeiro, 1935).

[4] Arthur Ramos, O negro brasileiro (2nd ed.; São Paulo, 1940).

[5] Edison Carneiro, Candomblés da Bahia, (Publicações do Museu do Estado, No. 8 [Bahia, 1948]).

[6] Donald Pierson, Negroes in Brazil (Chicago, 1942).

[7] Ruth Landes, The City of Women (New York, 1947).

[8] Octavio da Costa Eduardo, The Negro in Northern Brazil (New York, 1948).

[9] Carneiro, Candomblés da Bahia, p. 31.

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178 [177] [114] are easier to understand and to comply with. In the town of Vila Recôncavo there are two houses of cult activities with female leaders, and in the rural area there is one such house with a male leader. These are the three houses which were studied by the author. There are six more in the area, but they are much smaller and poorer than these three.

793 794 [165] One of the three is led by a woman almost a hundred years old. She is now completely blind and can barely walk about the house. She has not been outside of it for several years. She has an assistant, a young man in his twenties, who as a child brought her firewood and water and who now has been taught by her much of the cult ritual. The house is now inactive, for the old woman has outlived her former followers, or else they have moved away. The room which contains the insignia of the African spirits is still kept up, and the proper foods and drinks are always placed there by the young man, in accordance with the instructions of the old lady. She herself does little, although she still consults the spirits by throwing cowrie shells. Her fame as a cult leader is widespread, and people still come to her for help, but she is too feeble to do much. In her day she was a "purist" and went through the long training period necessary to become a devotee and later a cult leader. She still knows a few words of Nagô, the Yoruban language, and laments the passing of her generation, with whom she says she conversed only in this language. Several of her initiates broke away and started their own houses in other places, although according to her they were not ready to assume leadership since they did not know enough of the mysteries.

The other two houses studied are led by disciples of one of the old woman's devotees who broke away. There is no contact among the three, although the two younger leaders are in awe of the old woman, aware that she knows much more than they do and that in her eyes they are only upstarts, manipulating something mystical which they are not sufficiently prepared to control. She does not intimidate them, however, and now ignores their activities, since they both have recently accepted the Indian spirits which the old woman feels are bogus. She is more interested in passing on her knowledge to the young man who cares for her house, though she complains that he is too indifferent to her teachings. He is learning a great deal, however, though he has not yet "made" his saint, that is, he is not yet a full-fledged devotee. Preparations for

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this are being made, however, and it is hoped he will be ready 794
for it before her death. In the meantime she has legally willed [428]
the house and its material belongings to him, and is also passing
along to him her spiritual heritage. He is learning the
mystical part of the cult, but she cannot show him the outer
forms, such as dancing and other physical motions of worship,
because she is too infirm. Traditionally only women went [782]
through training for worship in the Brazilian cults, for the belief
is that the gods descend and "ride" or "mount" the disciple. [462]
This could only be done with women disciples. However, [178]
one of the changes reaching the cults now is the entrance
of men as devotees. Very often they are effeminate, as is the
case with the young man who is helping the old woman. The
old one is not pleased with having a man perform the duties
of her cult house, but she feels she must be satisfied with him
because there is no one else in her house. Although all her
former disciples are gone, now at least she will have someone
to dispatch her saints when she dies, a complicated ritual
which must be properly carried out.

One of the other two houses is in the town and is led by Roxa, who has "made her saint" but who by cult standards should still be a devotee in another house, for she is not considered well enough prepared to be leading a house of her own. Her house is extremely weak, with few followers, most of whom have not yet "made their saints." Roxa is the main figure, the one most often possessed and through whom the spirits speak. As a young girl she went through a fairly rigorous period of training, but broke away before it was completed. She says she fulfills the necessary obligations now only because if she did not she would become sick. She calls the whole thing a "complication" in her life which must be looked after. She has been married but is now widowed and childless.

The other house, located on one of the plantations run by an
overseer, is led by a man in his forties. He also claims that 793
he is in the cult because of his health. As a boy and young man 794
he was always sick and his entire body ached. One day in the
field he found a "lightning stone" (pedra de raio). Such stones 778
are common in the cults and are thought to have been sent [172]
from the sky, although they really are American Indian artifacts,
such as arrowheads and hatchets, and are constantly
turned up in the soil. At first he did not know what the stone
was and took it home, but on discovering that it had supernatural
significance, he threw it away, for he wanted nothing

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794 to do with cultism. His parents were strongly opposed to cultism
[778] and had told him that it was bad. But the next day the
stone was back in his house, frightening him. He again threw
it away, and again it reappeared in his house. Then he took
it to the cult leader on the plantation, who told him that it was
a sign that he had an obligation to fulfill toward the gods. To
[782] put an end to the matter, it was necessary to make certain
appeasements in the form of food and drink. So he began to
save money, and at the same time took instruction from the
woman as to what to do. During this time he became genuinely
interested in cultism and became the "most curious"
(428) of the woman's disciples. He studied for many years with her
and did as much as he could in the ceremonies. When she died
[765] she left the house to him, as he was the most active among
her followers. After he had observed the honorary period of
a year after her death and had properly dispatched her saints,
he moved into the house where he has now been leader for
[578] thirteen years. Because of jealousies and fights over the inheritance,
many of the devotees broke away and went to other
houses, taking their saints with them.

793 Three years after he had taken over the house, he had his
794 first experience with the Indian spirit Seven Stars, who came
to him in a dream and let it be known that he wanted to enter
787 the man and become part of the cult. For some time the man
resisted, for the cult was traditionally *Nagô* and the former
177 leader would have had nothing to do with Indian spirits. Seven
Stars, however, threatened him with extinction if he did
not comply, so in the end he gave in, and one night during a
ceremony was possessed by Seven Stars. Everyone liked Seven
Stars, because he was a very happy and gay spirit and
danced well. After this many other devotees in the house were
also possessed by this as well as by one or two other Indian
spirits, neither of which, however, was considered as nice
as Seven Stars.

794 According to dogma, there are twenty-one Indian spirits,
787 although the informant could not name them all and neither
could anyone else. All twenty-one live in an *aldeia* (village) in
177 the woods. There was nothing in the African tradition to tell
[776] what preparation was necessary for these spirits, so the entire
ritual became one of inventiveness and propitiousness.
Nowadays young people who enter the cults are nearly always
taken by an Indian spirit and are much pleased, for these spirits
involve less expense and much less work. The major com-

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plaint about African deities is the amount of work involved and 787
the great expense entailed by making the proper clothes and 177
buying the beads and bracelets. All leaders say that no one
can afford traditional spirits these days. Those who had for-
merly had them, of course, still do, but have also been vis-
ited by Indian spirits which they much prefer. So they car- 794
ry out the more fundamental obligations toward the African 178
spirits, such as providing food and drink, but they dress and
dance for their Indian spirits. The result has been a confu- 177
sion of rituals--the use of African music and incantations and [782]
the addition of new dances, costumes, and foods appropriate
for the simpler tastes of the Indian spirits.

The cult houses (*terreiros*) are built like other houses in 794
the community. The active one in town is located on a street
in line with all the other houses, while that on the plantation 346
is set slightly apart from the others, because of the scattered
configuration of the village. The front room, which is the 353
largest, is usually bare except for a few long wooden bench- [361]
es and a small altar with pictures of the patron saints of the
cult leader and of several of the cult members. This room is [352]
decorated with crepe paper streamers and paper flowers; the
dances are held here. The other rooms of the house consist
of a bedroom, a dining room, a kitchen, and another room
known as the *pegi*, which houses the African altar with its
plants and leaves, dishes, bottles, cups, and glasses of food
and drink for the spirits, as well as the symbol of each one
of them, such as a spade, a sword, or a hatchet. In this room
there is also usually a trunk containing the ceremonial para-
phernalia used during the festivities, such as the dress and
headdress of each spirit. This is the room in which sacri- [782]
ficial killings (*matanças*) are made of the goats and chickens
used during the ceremonies. In the rural house there are also
pictures of Catholic saints in the *pegi*, another departure from
the older traditional houses where such a thing would never
occur.

The cult leader lives in the cult house. In the literature on 793
candomblé the cult leader is usually referred to as the *mae*, 794
or *pai*, *de santo*, which means literally "mother (or father) 192
of the saints." None of the cult leaders in Vila Recôncavo likes [346]
this term; they say they could not possibly be the mother or
father of the divine beings. They consider themselves rather
zeladores, that is, caretakers of the saints on earth. There is 794
much the same complaint about the term *filha*, or *filho*, *de* 192

794 192 [787] *santo*, which means literally "daughter (or son) of the saint." They prefer to refer to a person as "having a saint" (*tem santo*) which indicates that he has an obligation toward one of the saints and becomes possessed by him. In ordinary speech the word "saint" is used, but once the person has "made his saint" --that is, has gone through the preparatory rites and has learned the cries and dances of the divinity and how to care for him properly--it is said that the person has Ômolú, or Sete Estrelas (Seven Stars).

794 787 776 Because most of the women, and the few men in the cults, cannot spend a year segregated in the cult house in order to "make their saint," they continue for many years in the half-way condition of someone who "has a saint but has not yet made the saint." This means that the person has experienced possession, and that it has been determined by the *zelador* that he is under obligation to a certain saint and is in the process of "making the saint." During this period of simply "having the saint," the person has to carry out certain duties such as feeding the saint, making the proper clothes, and buying the beads and other outer symbols of the deity which are to be used during the ceremonies. This involves considerable expenditure. The clothes are always made of silk, since nothing is [511] too good for the saint. Today, lipstick, perfume, and cheap jewelry are competing for the few extra cents the girls have, so that it takes longer and longer to get the necessary items together. During this period, the obligations of dancing and possession are less strenuous. In the case of the Indian spirits, the deity often speaks through the person after one or two possessions, and this is taken to mean that the spirit is firmly upon the person and may be considered "made." In this fashion much arduous work is avoided, as well as considerable expense. This is a major reason for the growing popularity of the Indian saints, in addition to the fact that they are gayer.

794 533 [465] [776] The drummers also like Indian saints, for, after they have danced, the Indian spirits usually take up a collection which is presented to the drummers for having played so well for them. The drummers are drawn from men whose wives participate in the activities, or else they are men who are interested in the proceedings and who like to drum. They learn the drumming early in their lives, listening to it as children when they go to watch the ceremonies. On nights when the drums are playing it is impossible for anyone not to hear the impos-

ing, exciting sounds, which continue for hours on end. Little 794 533 boys pick up the rhythms quickly and soon associate each rhythm with the particular spirit who dances to it. As they grow older and show interest in it, they may be allowed to relieve one of the drummers during an interval and in this way join the others in some less important part of the ceremony, until finally the *zelador* feels they know enough to drum for the entire evening.

The entire proceedings are considered too strenuous for 794 children, as much for the boy drummers as for the girl danc- 857 ers. If a small girl shows signs of possession during the cer- [787] emony she is taken away, for until she is over fourteen dancing is considered too strenuous for her. But unless her fam- [869] ily refuses, she may be coached in all the rituals by the other dancers and the *zelador*. The ceremonies always draw more 794 onlookers than performers, and outside the rural cult house a man has set up a small stand to sell refreshments. As many [265] as can, enter the room and line the walls, while the others stand outside, looking in through the open doors and windows. Most people know the procedure in a vague way and know whom the drums are calling and who "has" which saint.

The ceremonies are rather long, the first step in the actual 794 performance being the calling of the saints. The evening's 796 participants dance in a circle while the drums call the various spirits. It sometimes takes quite a while for the saint to 787 come, and there are times when he does not come at all. One young man danced unsuccessfully for over an hour and was finally removed, exhausted, by the *zelador*. When someone in the circle "falls," he is quickly led out of the room and into the *pegi* where the *zelador* changes his clothing, putting on him the costume of the spirit. In the meantime the others rest or may keep on dancing, becoming possessed one after the other, depending upon the type of ceremony. After the possessed person has been dressed and has completed the necessary ritual, he is led back into the main room where he now, as the saint, dances in earnest until tired or angered by something which occurs in the room. Often the *zelador* gives [533] the signal for the drums to change their rhythm, indicating the end of the dance, by which time the person is physically very tired although emotionally highly keyed up. He is led back into the *pegi* to complete the detailed rituals, and is then given a place to rest and to come back to normal. As a rule he soon joins the others in the front room as a spectator. By

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796 then the drums are calling the other saints, the circle has
[787] been formed again, and the process is repeated. This goes
on frequently all night long, ending only with the dawn. The
[369] rural cult house has a general ceremony for all the saints of
the house during the New Year holiday, and it often takes three or four days and nights of continuous dancing and drumming for all the participants to "fulfill their obligations." Activities cease for a while during the day while everyone rests, and then pick up again late in the afternoon.

794 The general rule is that the person who "has a saint" must
796 fulfill his obligations to that spirit at least once a year, if
possible on the saint's day. Of course, the proper foods must
776 be supplied constantly throughout the year, but at least once a
[787] year the saint must be feted, that is, called to possess the
person and dance. The general term used for the ceremony is _bater_ (to beat, referring to the drums), although several other euphemisms are used, such as, "We are going to have a party," or, "We are going to play." If the person is unable to fete the saint on the specified day, however, he must do it at the general ceremony at the end of the year. Not to comply with the rituals would be disastrous. The _zelador_ of the house always fetes his saint on the proper day as well as at the end of the year. In both active cult houses the _zeladores_ have more than one saint and try to fete each on the specified date. All participants keep the symbolic paraphernalia of their saints in the cult house and look after them personally if possible, but for many of them who live far from the house the _zelador_ does this. In many cases a person who "has a saint" has a miniature _pegi_ in his own house and also keeps there the prop-
[782] er foods and drinks. In some cases an older woman may even
have a ceremony in her home if she can afford the requisite sacrificial animals and foods.

794 Membership in the cults is not always passed down from parents to children. Many of the younger participants have come into the cults on their own and may be children of families which are unsympathetic to cult activities. When a mother belongs to a cult, her children may be indoctrinated in the rituals because of their continued attendance at the ceremonies. But unless the children feel the call themselves, no pressure is applied upon them to enter the activities, though they may always participate vicariously in the ceremonies. The majority of the population say they have nothing to do with the cults and are ignorant of the ritual. But few members of

the lower classes fail to have at least some knowledge of the 794
ceremonial. In a region where there is little entertainment, [517]
such as in the town of Vila Recôncavo and especially in the [796]
rural area, the cults provide a major spectator activity, and
those who have been exposed to it through their lives appreciate
it as such. The number of active participants, however, 794
is small. The house which is functioning in the town has about 369
two dozen initiates, while the rural house is somewhat larger,
having about forty-five devotees, only seven of whom are
drawn from the plantation on which the house is situated. The
rural house is more active for several reasons, according to
local informants: the costumes are prettier, and therefore
people prefer to dance there; the cult leader is a stronger
personality and a better healer than the leader of the town
house. The rural house is also more conveniently located for
people from the surrounding plantations. Nevertheless, the
small number of participants is indicative of the weakness of
the institution in this area as a whole.

Healing, however, does play an important part in the cult 794
activities, for the *zelador* who has "made his saint" has usually 793
learned a large number of ritual and herbal cures. In
fact, it is the healing aspect which brings most people to the 755
cult activities. Sick persons, however, generally prefer to entrust 757
themselves first to the ministrations of the plantation
owner, plantation nurse, or town doctor. But if they feel they
are not being helped, they turn to the cult house. If the sickness
is diagnosed by the cult leader as a clear sign that the
person is in contact with a spirit, the patient must enter the
rites as an initiate or suffer the consequences. But for the [776]
ordinary run of headaches, stomach troubles, and skin eruptions,
the cult leader draws upon his knowledge of herbal remedies.
This knowledge is supposed to come from his deity,
who often is St. Roch in this area, and who knows the cure.
In fact, the leader of the rural house once compared his establishment
with a pharmacy. He is paid for these medical
services. Often one hears a person wishing that he could
"have" such-and-such a saint so he would know how to cure
and be able to make money, as do the cult leaders.

It is a general opinion that cult leaders are financially well 793
off, although they themselves staunchly declare that they are 794
not and that they must live from alms. As a rule all the participants
in a house are obliged to contribute to the ceremonial
honoring the leader's deity, which is usually the most extravagant
ceremonial of the house.

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794 travagant ceremonial of the house. The fulfillment of individual obligations is very expensive, too much so for one 435 person to pay for it himself. The ceremony given at the end of the year in 1950 cost the members of the house almost two thousand cruzeiros in foods, sacrificial animals, candles, kerosene for the lamps, clothing, and ornaments. Individual members spent as much as four hundred cruzeiros on their clothes and beads, in addition to contributing to the common fund, not to mention their labor in cooking and in washing and ironing all the costumes and clothes used during the ceremonies. [434] Such large sums of money are hard to get, so the number of ceremonies per year is decreasing. Not only are the salaries [458] of the people low and inflation high, but more and more things which were not formerly available in the area--such as mov- [511] ies, wrist watches, jewelry other than the beads and bracelets symbolic of the deities, perfume, and lipstick--lay claim on the people's attention and purses.

* 565 Participation in the cults is generally considered to be an activity of lower-class people, and in Vila Recôncavo only 794 such people are seen dancing and carrying out their other cult obligations. Individuals of other classes, however, do par- 184 ticipate either indirectly or secretly. Class A displays a genuine lack of knowledge about the cult activities, in spite of being brought up within sound of the drums and within sight of the outward symbols of the African and Indian deities. These people, although they speak with disdain of cultism and of the paganism involved, have a certain respect for it and usually refrain from interfering with it in any way. They maintain a type of joking relationship in regard to it with the workers who they know participate in it, but seldom if ever attend a ceremony. Ceremonies are infrequently held on family-owned plantations when the owners are present. Most of them take place on plantations run by overseers.

Class B in the town has several members who help support the cult house and indirectly participate in its activities, especially in reference to the Mother of the Waters ritual. Since education, which implies freedom from belief in cultism, is a criterion of class position, members of Class B in public denounce cultism and those who participate in it. But many of them, coming from families which participated in it, retain some belief in the cults and fear them. They do not completely cut themselves off from cultism. They participate in it secretly, sending money to the cult leader and presents to the Moth-

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er of the Waters. Naturally, in such a small group, the secret is not very well kept and it is soon known who has sent a present, why, and when. Many people in this group, and some in Class A, entertain the fear that they may become themselves possessed by a deity, especially if they expose themselves to cult activities during a ceremony, and for this reason they do not attend the rituals. To a certain extent this fear is the basis for the protest many of them make against night-long drumming, although the common complaint is that they cannot sleep because of the noise. The sound of the drums at night is very impressive, and no one is unaware that nearby the supernatural is being called. It is very disturbing to those who do not understand the mechanics of the ceremonies and the meaning of the drumming and sacrifices.

Spiritualism

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Spiritualism, which does not use drums, is as disturbing as cultism to people of all classes, although because of its quieter character it is not always known when a session is taking place. Spiritualism seems to be gaining popularity in the area, although it is greatly feared by many people. It is slowly gaining adherents, however, because of the healing powers exhibited by the mediums. In most cases people are drawn to it, both in the town and in the rural area, through illness and the promise of a cure. Because of lack of aid from the doctor, or because of the expense of medical treatment, or perhaps because of the failure of the African cult to cure him, a patient may try spiritualism as a last resort. For those who are helped by it, it becomes a constant companion, and although they may have entered with fear, they soon lose it. They become staunch defenders and try to draw in their friends. The greatest successes in curing seem to follow the herbal treatments of the African cultists, but spiritualism requires no further obligations, as do the cults. It is common to hear someone say that attendance at a spiritualist seance cured him of some minor ailment and left him free of obligations, and that he did not even have to pay the medium. Spiritualism is also used to discover and counteract the evil eye and evil machinations of any enemy. In spiritualism one finds the same Indian spirits which are found in the local African cults, although no dancing is involved. There is now definite competition between the mediums and the cult leaders for adherents.

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There is one outstanding case of a Class A family which has been "helped" by spiritualism. This family had not been too well liked in the town and felt that evil was being worked against it. It was claimed that a local medium prevented harm to the father of this family through the medium's spirit. The father became convinced of the value of spiritualism and converted his wife to it. They now make no move without first consulting the spirits, and they frequently call the medium to their house in Salvador for aid. The urban upper class is no stranger to spiritualism, and even those who make no use of mediums and spiritualistic sessions seem to consider themselves possible victims of spiritualism. A decade or so ago, experiments with spiritualism, such as the moving glass, were popular. These experiments gained many adherents and left many others in a state between belief and disbelief in the possibilities of spiritualism.

Protestantism

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Protestantism has made no entry in Vila Recôncavo. This is a minor point of pride among the residents, who have heard of Protestantism but know nothing about it. In other areas of the Recôncavo there have been converts, but as yet there are no Protestant churches, chapels, or house groups in Vila Recôncavo. In other communities, traveling ministers hold services in small private houses of the adherents. Just as with the African cults, there always are many onlookers standing outside who discuss the merits of the sermon and of the Bible readings and hymn singing. Those who are sufficiently impressed sometimes join, but as yet there is considerable resistance to another organized religion.

9. Recent Changes in Vila Recôncavo

THE FIELD WORK described in Chapters 1 through 8 of 101
this study was carried out from June, 1950, to June, 1951.
In 1955 and 1956 the author had the opportunity to do further 128
work in Vila Recôncavo. This chapter is a summary of some
of the changes which have occurred during the five-year period
from 1951 to 1956.

First, the sugar industry has undergone several changes, 178
developing still further from the plantation (*engenho*) toward 249*
the highly industrialized factory (*usina*) as postulated in the
introduction. The factory-plantation system, as distinct from 596
the private plantations, has experienced the most change.

Usina São Pedro was described earlier as a family corporation, 178
owned and directed by members of one extended family. 249*
At one time in the past five years, this family was obliged to 473
take into the corporation a large amount of capital representing
a second family enterprise, considerably larger in scope [471]
than that of the first. Within a short period the second family
achieved complete control of the factory through a series of
financial manipulations. As a result, Usina São Pedro passed
from the Conde family's ownership and direction, and is now
just one element of a large commercial firm.

For a more complete understanding of Bahian society it is 596
necessary that we examine this second family corporation. 473
The key word is "family," which represents almost a constant
in this culture. The second family, the Helvetians, is a second 249*
generation immigrant family. The major activities of the family
corporation--there are other stockholders, especially employees,
with small holdings--have always been commercial:
exporting, importing, distributing, and transporting. The cor-

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473 poration has extensive landholdings in other parts of the state,
*249 but they are exploited on an impersonal, profit basis, not on the traditional, paternalistic basis common in the sugar area.

*[565] The Helvetians have taken a place in the upper ranks of Bahian society, representing new money and economic power. Their history is important. The original immigrant married into a Bahian family of "good name," and all of his sons have done the same. One of them married a daughter of the Coroncl, founder of Usina São Pedro. It was through this marriage that the transfer of the factory was channeled. Today, although the Condes still own stock in the corporation, the Helvetians have the controlling interest, and the Condes are gradually selling their shares to the Helvetians.

466 The new corporation has brought about many changes in ad-
178 ministration of the factory. Although still a family corporation,
*249 it has become, from the wider, community, point of view, a strictly business enterprise with no family ties and no face-
473 to-face personal relations. A new directorship and management was established. The new "boss" of the factory is a man
[596] from a different part of the state, and his background is en-
[571] tirely different from that of sugar-cane growers. The thread of "family" is still unbroken, for the new manager is related to the new owning family by marriage. He is treated, however, as a paid employee of the corporation. His brother, now general administrator of the agricultural part of the factory-in-the-field, is treated similarly.

These two new managers have put the relations between management and labor on a strictly business basis and have removed all elements of paternalism. Upon taking over, they dismissed most of the older, higher-level factory, field, and office workers. Administrators, mechanics, and bookkeepers, most of whom had seen twenty years or more of service, were dispatched. New people came to take their places, and some of the vacancies were filled by promotions. Time clocks were installed, and the system of authority was reinforced all the way down the line. Social legislation--a new factor in rural, agricultural Brazil--was invoked to take the place of paternalism.

178 Thus the old, paternalistic, personal, owner-director pat-
*249 tern has changed completely. The chalet is no longer the scene of family gatherings for summer vacations, for Carnaval, or for Christmas; even the traditional Botada has undergone a

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change. New faces and basically different relationships pre- [466]
vail at Usina São Pedro.

Another change, but this time in tune with the past, was an
increase of capital, applied to the improvement of the factory. 178
The capacity of the mill has been greatly enlarged. However, 249*
the agricultural part of the combination continues as it did be- 433
fore, with no innovations. The result is that the factory is
able to mill and produce sugar much more quickly than it can [471]
be supplied with sugar cane. The hierarchical aspect of the
factory as earlier diagrammed remains the same, and each [466]
plantation is still run as a separate unit.

In contrast, the private plantation in the community of Vila 178
Recôncavo has undergone relatively little change in these five 249*
years. Always the most conservative element in the Recôncavo,
the private plantation continues to retain its distinguishing fea- [466]
ture: the personal, face-to-face, paternalistic owner-worker
relations. The hierarchical pattern remains the same. Opera- 178
tions are still basically hand- and animal-powered, but pri-
vate planters are slowly introducing mechanization in certain 249*
aspects of the process, especially that of transportation; 461
trucks and tractor-drawn wagons carry cane from the fields [492]
to the factory. Tractors and mechanical plows are used to an
increasingly large extent in the preparation of the soil, and [493]
mechanical cultivators are already in use on some planta- [407]
tions. However, the bulk of the work is still done by hand,
and traction is supplied by oxen and mules. As yet no me- [492]
chanical loaders, ditch-diggers, or planters have appeared, [407]
and little use is made of fertilization or herbicides. Few sci- [242]
entific agricultural practices are in use. The planter is still
first and foremost a "practical" man.

Relations between the factory and the private plantations 178
have also undergone considerable change, in both business 249*
and social aspects. The new managers of the factory have
succeeded in almost completely alienating the private planters 571
who supply them with sugar cane. Not only the members of
the extended Conde family, but also other cane suppliers re-
sented the highhanded, brusque methods of the new managers.
Wishing to break completely with the past, the new managers
instituted several new policies in relations with the cane sup- [443]
pliers. Formerly the private suppliers bought sugar by the
sack, bought their supplies at the company store, and had [452]
their machines repaired at the company workshops, paying
for such services at the end of the harvest season. The sup- [407]

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*249 pliers were presented with accounts showing how much cane
had been sent to the mill, the price, how much the factory had
571 paid the bank on the supplier's loans, how much had been
452 advanced the supplier for his cane, and how much was still owed
the supplier, discounting the costs of services received from
407 the factory facilities. This has been traditional practice, not
only at Usina São Pedro, but also at the other factories of the
178 area. Now, however, Usina São Pedro expects to receive
cash at the moment of the transaction for each such service
*249 the supplier receives. In addition, the factory has gradually
cut down on the number of services it offers the suppliers.
571 This has been particularly serious regarding services of the
407 mechanics, as the private suppliers have no other source of
437 repair for their machines except in the city; taking them into
the city costs a great deal of time and is more expensive than
were the services performed by the factory mechanics.

178 The new managers at first charged an automatic discount
upon the cane tonnage supplied by each private plantation. This
*249 resulted in a considerable loss of money at the end of the year
571 for each private supplier, thereby straining even more the
relations which daily were becoming more and more
432 disagreeable. Any question of scale and tonnage is a touchy one for
private planters, who sell their cane by the weight. The
[656] discount charged on general principles by the factory was so
serious a matter that several of the private suppliers united
and called the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol to their defense
and succeeded in correcting the situation. This was a "first"
for Usina São Pedro, where such a thing had never before
happened, and where such a recourse is considered an
extreme.

178 Social relationships between the private planters and the
*249 managers of the factory are almost nonexistent. Whereas a
few years ago the factory was the central gathering point for
571 the social life of the planters of the area, it is now a place to
be avoided. In addition to making working conditions difficult,
the new managers and their families are "outsiders" in this
small, closed plantation society, with different backgrounds
and manners. As a result of the new conditions, the private
planters are spending more time on their plantations than
before, but their social life rotates from one plantation to
another, skipping the factory nucleus. This pattern is also
reflected in the activities of the resident workers, who are
upset at the treatment shown to the older employees of the fac-

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tory and its fields, and who are slowly drifting away from 178 249*
visiting the factory nucleus. 571

An overall result of the new conditions between private
planters and the factory is a desire on the part of the suppliers
of São Pedro to become independent of this outlet. Several of
the suppliers are shifting their cane to other neighboring factories,
when this is convenient. Most of them are seriously [311]
considering shifting to another crop, as will be described
below; in fact a goodly proportion of land has already been
taken out of sugar-cane production, thus diminishing future
cane harvests and endangering the cane supply of Usina São
Pedro.

What was formerly a peaceful, "all in the family," almost
preservelike area has become an area of tensions and of poor
business, and social, relations. The situation has all the possibilities
of a traditional sugar-cane kind of land capture. The
factory needs land in order to produce more cane so that the
mill can operate at capacity. No one is willing to sell to the
factory, nor even to supply as much cane as he might under
other conditions. But the private planters are dependent upon
the factory, economically and for services. Therefore it is an [452]
easy matter for the factory to make difficulties for the individual
planter, even gradually forcing him into failure, since
the planter operates on credit and has little latitude for even
a single crop failure. Such a failure gives the factory an opportunity [425]
to acquire badly needed lands at a bargain.

The sugar industry in the community of Vila Recôncavo has 178
also undergone changes in the labor aspects, in line with the 249*
entire industry. As was pointed out in Chapter 4, the price
of the sugar cane and the sugar is artificially regulated, and 43
has been rising slowly over a period of years. However, nationwide [656]
social legislation in the past three years has raised
the wages of the workers annually, before the price increases
were granted by the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol. Spiraling [458]
inflation has also helped raise all the costs, of labor, of materials, [466]
and of machinery. Whereas prices for the task done
have always been fairly well regulated, they have recently become
a very strong issue, and there is much worker discontent.
The planter, whether private or corporate, is more than
ever interested in holding down the costs of his labor supply,
since other costs, particularly of machinery and repairs, are
soaring, always narrowing the margin between the total cost
of production and the established selling price.

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*249 For the first time in the history of Vila Recôncavo the workers'
discontent has taken the form of a strike accompanied by
468 violence. The strike, although a general one throughout the
sugar industry, was the first one in which workers of Vila Recôncavo
participated. It was specifically directed against the
178 agricultural part of the factory combination; however, it affected
some private plantations as well, and was joined by
*249 workers of private plantations. The strike was put down immediately
468 and effectively by the state police. On investigation
the police found considerable Communist literature and propaganda
467 in the quarters of the labor union in Centro which had
organized the strike. The labor union itself was illegal, since
668 it was not registered with the proper authorities, and its leaders
[625] were well-known Communist agitators. What is important
for our study is the appearance in the community of Vila Recôncavo
of written and verbal Communist propaganda and the
willingness of the local agricultural workers to participate in
a general strike. This is a tremendous change for such a conservative
area, where loyalty and paternalism have always
been so strong.

178 Thus the sugar industry of Vila Recôncavo has entered a
*249 phase of many new difficulties: ties between factory and private
planters are strained, and labor relations are becoming
571 a problem for the private, as well as the corporate, planters.
Inflation and the "dollar situation," which affect planters directly
466 since all machinery must be imported, are also working
toward the build-up of a new "crisis," continuing the pattern
described in Chapter 3.

178 However, a new element is entering the community of Vila
245 Recôncavo in the form of a new crop, cacao. One of the planters
began experimenting with cacao during the author's first
242 period of research in Vila Reconcavo. However, at least five
years must pass before it can be known if the cacao tree will
give satisfactory fruit. At the end of 1955 the Institute of Cacao
of Bahia presented the experiment to the public as a success
and is now systematically stimulating interest in cacao as a
possible and lucrative substitute for sugar cane.

245 Cacao is Bahia's major export crop and in general means
439 money to a Bahian. Still more attractive is the fact that the
cacao introduced to the Recôncavo is a genetic mutation, giving
178 a white-seeded fruit which brings a much higher price on the
*[249] world market than does the ordinary fruit. The financial attraction
of cacao, plus the disagreeable and financially weak

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position of the sugar industry in Vila Recôncavo, is creating considerable interest on the part of the community's planters. Just as sugar cane is limited by soil and climatic conditions, so also is the cacao. There is little fear, therefore, of competition from many other areas. In addition, cacao is exportable, while the sugar of the area is for internal consumption only.

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In spite of the attraction of this new crop, there are a number of problems which must be dealt with. First, the details of a change from sugar cane to cacao must be worked out, especially as regards space and financing. The planter must juggle his sugar plantings, pastures, and rotation lands so that he can slowly take out land for preparation for cacao. If he wants to finance the changeover himself, he cannot lessen his sugar production; in fact, he needs more money than before. Banks in general lend on the forthcoming crop; if the crop is reduced, so is the amount which can be borrowed. However, to overcome this, the Institute of Cacao of Bahia is preparing a financing program on a long-term basis. Sugar cane is a perennial, planted one year, bearing for the next three or four years, then ploughed under and replanted. Cacao, on the other hand, is a permanent tree crop which gives its first fruit in five years, reaches maturity in fifteen or twenty years, and then continues to produce annually for sixty to one hundred years. Thus sugar cane is financed on a one-year basis, while initial plantings of cacao must be financed on a long-term basis of ten to fifteen years. The change from a perennial crop to a permanent crop also requires a totally different mental set on the part of the planter.

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Cacao is a "forest crop," which means that it requires shading. Under primitive conditions it is planted in dense tropical forest. In Vila Recôncavo, however, the former tropical forest has been entirely cleared away during the last four hundred years, since sugar cane tolerates no shade. Therefore, before the cacao can be planted, shade must be provided. This is done by planting banana trees and, at fixed intervals, single seedlings of a precocious, long-living, high-growing shade tree. To pay for the work involved it is common to plant manioc between the banana trees. The manioc is gathered the following year, and shortly thereafter the young cacao trees can be planted. The banana trees offer sufficient shade for the young plants. For a period of five or six years the planter

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242 can collect bananas, which should pay for the operating costs while waiting for the cacao to mature.

[434] At the end of a five- or six-year period, the shade tree is usually large enough to provide sufficient shade, and the banana trees are gradually removed. At the same time the cacao begins to give its fruit, and one can then consider himself a cacauicultor.

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[407] Several planters in Vila Recôncavo are at the banana-manioc planting stage, and have met with their first serious labor problem. No one wants to work in banana and manioc fields, as the work is arduous and slow. Machines are not available for the mechanical cultivation of manioc, so the work must be done by hand. The work is slowly being accomplished, but at costs which will make the manioc a considerable liability.

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*[249] Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, there is considerable interest in cacao in Vila Recôncavo, and cacao must be considered as an element of change in the community which will have far-reaching effects. The area of sugar production will be considerably reduced, requiring adjustments on the part of the factories, which represent large financial investments. Furthermore, cacao is a fairly simple product to process--its conversion into chocolate is usually done after export --and so it is quite likely that each plantation will return to the older aspect of the plantation, both growing and processing the crop, and become once again a highly self-sufficient unit. [571] This would of course bring about a new alignment of socio-economic relations and would undoubtedly alter the community structure.

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433 A third principal cause of change in Vila Recôncavo is the growth of a new and potent industry within the community and throughout the county. This new industry is the nascent Brazilian petroleum industry. Exploratory work was done in Vila Recôncavo in 1950 and 1951 under the guidance of the Conselho Nacional de Petroleo. Since that date a nationalized company, Petrobrás, has been formed to exploit the oil fields which lie under the topsoil of the county of Vila Recôncavo. Petrobrás has brought in several hundred oil wells and has built roads, pipelines, storage tanks, and machine shops. Just outside the limits of the community, but within the county, it has built [425] its oil refinery and has created a small new, modern city to house the technical workers of the refinery and the field. On land expropriated from the Usina São Pedro it has also con-

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structured a series of barracks, a recreation hall, a restaurant, and a service center for the unmarried field workers. [425]

In spite of this, the changes in the community structure brought about by the petroleum industry have been as yet relatively few. [464] The industry exists in the community as an intruder, not affecting communal life to any great extent, and not contributing any substantial local benefits. This is perhaps in part due to the fact that it is a nationalized company, with headquarters located in the city of Salvador, rather than a product of local efforts. The petroleum workers for the most part have not been drawn from the local labor force but have come from outside the county. It is almost as if a military base had been established in Vila Recôncavo on a temporary basis.

[362] The effect on the town has been principally to increase the number of houses. [571] The married workers of Petrobrás for the most part live in the town. Naturally there has occurred a broadening of point of view among the town dwellers as a result of social intercourse, as well as a certain new prosperity due to greater numbers. [493] Nevertheless, there are still no private cars, buses, or public transportation in the county. [494] The petroleum workers and their families go to Salvador whenever possible for shopping and amusements, [484] rather than attempting to satisfy these needs in Vila Recôncavo, where public services, diversions, and so forth have continued to be almost nonexistent.

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To counterbalance the effect of prosperity brought to the town by increased population, the petroleum industry has had an adverse effect on the fishing activities of the townspeople. Many wells have been drilled in the shallow waters of the Bay of All Saints in front of the town. As a result of underwater explosions, the constant passage of rapid motor launches, and digging and dredging machines, the traditional fishing area of the town's fishermen has been rapidly depleted and its ecological balance destroyed. The fishermen are gradually turning away from fishing as an occupation and seeking other remunerative activity, either outside the community or in the petroleum industry and, to a slight extent, in the sugar industry. Others are turning to service occupations, such as bricklaying, as stopgap activities.

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Petrobrás to date has affected rural life very little. The planters of the area have profited to some extent because of the roads constructed by the company. It is now possible to

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433 travel from the city to the plantations by car at almost any
49 season of the year. It is a two-hour trip, considerably more
comfortable than the old system of travel by boat and on horseback. In addition, the roads have made it possible for the planters to transport their cane more efficiently, using trucks and tractor-drawn wagons. Along with this, the refinery has led to greater supplies of diesel oil, gasoline, and kerosene, so that it is no longer necessary to transport these items from the city at great cost and delay.

178 The planters have also profited in another manner. Petro-
315 brás invaded the cane fields in its search of oil. It fenced
311 small areas where it drilled and constructed storage tanks,
433 and it took out of cane production a good deal of land for roads and installations. Recently a basis has been reached for paying
427 the planters in a satisfactory manner for the use of the lands.
As a result each planter whose land is partially occupied now receives an annual cash payment based on what the occupied
[421] land could produce. As yet no arrangements have been made
for the landowners to participate in the profits of Petrobrás, since all subsoil riches belong to the nation, and therefore in this case to Petrobrás.

178 There has been little social intercourse between the planters
315 and the personnel of Petrobrás, either in the rural area or in
571 the city of Salvador. From time to time the higher echelon
employees of Petrobras are invited to larger parties given by the planters, and in return the planters are sometimes invited to parties at the refinery. But the plantation society is so closed and so firmly based on family relationships that it is difficult to maintain steady social relations with newcomers. In addition, the engineers and other specialists of the oil industry are principally oriented toward the capital city, and there is no serious attempt made to establish social relationships with the planters.

The sugar-cane workers for their part are so definitely plantation-oriented that they seek little diversion among the new oil workers. The unmarried field workers of Petrobrás who might be expected to establish relationships with the rural population seldom do so. They live in a fenced barracks area which immediately gives the impression of a group cut off from the rest of society. When they do seek entertainment they go as a rule to the factory nucleus, or to the town of Vila Recôncavo, or to the nearby town of Milagres.

Politically, this influx of new workers has had little in-

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Politically, this influx of new workers has had little influence. Local politics, at least, remain in the hands of the traditional landowners. However, national political parties other than that of the landowners are gaining force, especially the labor party, and within the near future there will undoubtedly be considerable modification in the voting patterns. The bulk of the rural population do not have the franchise because of their illiteracy. On the other hand, the petroleum workers, whose level of living is considerably higher than that of the rural population, have the franchise and according to law must exercise it.

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A major area of change in the community is the class structure. In its main outlines the class structure remains the same, but there are some differences in emphasis. Class A, the rural upper class, which also is part of the upper class in the capital city where it resides part of the year, has been somewhat depleted. The Coronel and his son and son-in-law and their families, who constituted the family owner-directors of Usina São Pedro, are no longer part of the scene. As a result of the shift in ownership and direction the former usineiro has been replaced by paid employees.[1] Although these employees are related to the principal members of the new owning firm by marriage, they are treated as employees rather than as family members. They do not have the "social standing," meaning tradition, background, extended family relations, and the scholarly training, which distinguish the former owners. Class A therefore is now represented only by the private plantation owners.

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On the other hand, Class B is slowly becoming larger in both the rural and the urban areas of the community, as a result of the addition of two new groups: the members of the new factory organization, and the petroleum workers with their much higher standard of living, considerably higher education, and their steady employment as members of a new bureaucracy, Petrobrás. Unmarried workers belonging to Petrobrás are to some extent seeking marital alliances with girls of the area, especially from the factory nucleus and from the town of Vila Recôncavo. In some cases legal and religious marriages have taken place. In other cases the couple has simply

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[1] The term usineiro is usually limited to the owner-director who is the founder of the factory, or is the son of the founder. When the director is a paid employee, he is just "the boss."

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58 begun to live together. But it is a general policy of Petrobrás
that its employees establish regularized households and register
their children, as the benefits of social legislation and insurance
[745] must be paid to legal beneficiaries, such as wives and
children. Because of the many recent marriages, there are
no longer any houses available in Vila Recôncavo, nor in Milagres,
[362] and there has been a spurt of housebuilding.

There have also been some shifts in emphasis in the structure
178 of the community. While the factory nucleus is no longer
621 the scene of social gathering for the upper class of the area,
*249 the structure of the factory-private plantation system ensures
that it continues to be the economic center as long as sugar
[434] cane is being planted in the area. The system of quotas established
for the private planter and the factory by the Institute
of Sugar and Alcohol requires that planter and factory
[361] cooperate in supplying and receiving sugar cane. Also, the
physical structure of the area, in which the factory is the
[496] center of the network of a small railroad which reaches out
to each of the private properties, strengthens the impression
of the factory as the center of activities.

178 The possible future shift from sugar to cacao will of course
diminish the importance of the sugar factory. However, in
443 the meantime there is a new factor which will give more importance
[245] than ever to the factory: a feira, or market place.
The county of Vila Recôncavo does not have a weekly market.
*[249] For many years the county officials have wanted to establish
one, not only for increased municipal income, but also to
help attract more people to the area and to make life easier
for the population. A market place is now under construction
at the factory nucleus. When the market is completed, the
factory town will become at least a weekly center of attraction
for many people of the surrounding plantations.

178 The development of the petroleum industry is bringing new
315 life to the town of Vila Recôncavo, to the nearby town of Milagres,
[311] and to the new city of Conselho. Petrobrás cannot
develop a nucleus on the land which belongs to the factory or
to the private owners, and therefore it must concentrate any
local community building efforts in the old public towns which
178 already exist. Petrobrás, indirectly, through the county court
315 of Vila Recôncavo, will soon contribute considerably to the
434 county income. The same sort of compensation which was
651 worked out in regard to the planters is now being arranged
for the county, through taxes on the finished products from
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the refinery, namely gasoline, kerosene, diesel oil, bottled 315
gas, and other petroleum derivatives. As a result of the in- 434
creased income, the county government will be able to build 651
up the county seat considerably. A hospital is already being 652
built, as well as a new dock for the boat which comes from the
city.

In Milagres, located in the neighboring county, there is al- 178
ready a considerable movement for breaking away from the 632
parent county and becoming a separate *municipio*, a common
pattern in Brazil for districts which reach a certain popula-
tion and degree of economic activity. Thus there are two pos-
sibilities for urban growth in the area and for the formation
of urban centers which will attract the large rural population.
The town of Vila Recôncavo is close to realizing other possi- 178
bilities. The construction of a road from the town to Centro 491
has already begun, filling a long-felt need. Its completion will 489
make it possible for cars, buses, and trucks to come from
Feira, on the edge of the *sertão*, to Centro, down through
Vila Recôncavo to Milagres, and on into the city, shortening
the long trip by the existing road which follows the edges of
the Recôncavo. Such traffic would "put Vila Recôncavo on the 178
map," and would greatly increase its contacts with the outside
world. In addition, the possibilities of the introduction of a 245
new crop to the community will bring increased commercial 652
activity and a much greater tax income, enabling the county
to build its own roads and bridges and to make other improve-
ments for the development of the area.

Thus the community structure of Vila Recôncavo, which five 179
years ago was in the process of crystallizing around the fac- 621
tory town, is now ripe for further change. The factory town
continues for the present to be the major center, but the old
county seat has all the possibilities of a rebirth of its former
importance. In fact, because of the petroleum industry and
the forthcoming changeover from sugar cane to cacao, the
factory town is threatened as a community center, the posi-
tion which it has only recently been consolidating.

Finally, one of the most important changes in Vila Recôn- 178
cavo in these five years is a change in attitude on the part of 181
the people. Vila Recôncavo was always known as a conserva-
tive community, maintaining its old traditions and ways, re-
jecting innovations. However, there is now an air of expect-
ancy and a search for new ways and new things. Dissatisfac-
tion with the sugar industry, combined with the appearance

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of a new industry and new people, has brought new ideas and the desire for change. The town of Vila Recôncavo is beginning to lose its forlorn air. Inhabitants of the rural area are no longer content with the old ways of hand and animal labor. The community as a whole seems to feel that it is on the verge of something new and exciting. The major outlines of what is to come are not yet clear, but a willingness for change is invading the area.

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